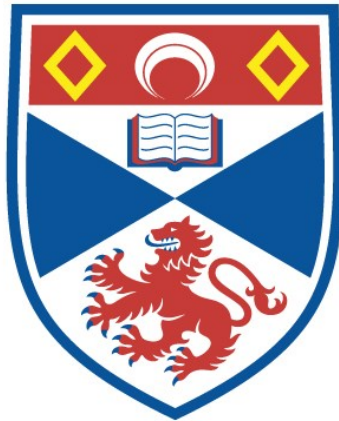


**JEROME'S EXCERPTA DE PSALTERIO: A STUDY IN  
ORIGINALITY AND METHODOLOGY; TOGETHER WITH A  
FIRST TRANSLATION INTO ENGLISH**

**Robin MacGregor Lane**

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of MPhil  
at the  
University of St Andrews**



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with a first translation into English.**

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**Thesis submitted for the degree of M.Phil**

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## Abstract

This study comprises two distinct sections. The first part is a study in the origins and methodology of Saint Jerome's *Excerpta de Psalterio*; and the second part a first translation into English of the Latin text, which is printed in the *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina*. In the first part, (the dissertation), I have arranged my research into three chapters. The first tackles the history of the *Excerpta* text, its title(s), and the question of Jerome's authorship. In this chapter I was particularly interested to research the links between this work and another by Origen, whom many scholars have suggested is the true author of the *Excerpta*. The second chapter takes a look at the educational background and situation of Jerome in the history of Biblical interpretation. Then it moves on to a more particular examination of Jerome's interpretative technique in the *Excerpta*. One of the aims of this chapter was to try to see Jerome's technique both as heavily indebted to, and yet innovatively building upon the work of other previous and contemporary Biblical interpreters. The third chapter examines in detail some of the characteristic uses of Hebrew words in Jerome's works, with an aim to assessing Saint Jerome's level of understanding of the Hebrew language. This is done with a view to reviewing the *Excerpta* in a new light, which takes into account all the linguistic work done by Jerome and not by Origen. This goes some way to clarifying dispute over the authorship of the work in question. This is followed by the Translation, the first (known) into English from the Latin of the CCSL, including footnotes and biblical references.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to give great thanks to the Arts and Humanities Research Board for the generous funding that was awarded for the carrying out of this research during the year 2000 to 2001.

Also to the two supervisors, Dr Robert Salters (Hebrew) and Dr Philip Burton (Latin), who have taken great care and time over my work throughout the past year, giving recommendations and advice whenever possible and necessary. I would also like to thank them for their great enthusiasm for my subject, which has without a doubt found its way into both my work, and my life.

To the staff of the University Library, who have assisted me often and kindly, I also give thanks.

## Abbreviations of Journals, Series, and Standard Reference Works

APOT	R.H. Charles (ed.) <i>Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament</i>
Bib	<i>Biblica</i>
BJRL	<i>Bulletin of the John Rylands Library</i>
BS	<i>Bibliotheca sacra</i>
BWANT	<i>Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament</i>
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CCL	<i>Corpus Christianorum: Series Latina</i>
CSEL	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum</i>
FC	<i>Fathers of the Church</i>
HTR	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
HTS	<i>Harvard Theological Studies</i>
HUCA	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
ICC	<i>International Critical Commentary</i>
IDB	G.A. Buttrick (ed.) <i>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i>
JAAR	<i>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</i>
JBC	R.E. Brown et al. (eds.) <i>Jerome Biblical Commentary</i>
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JBR	<i>Journal of Bible and Religion</i>
JQR	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
JTS	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
LCL	<i>Loeb Classical Library</i>
MGWJ	<i>Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums</i>
PEQ	<i>Palestine Exploration Quarterly</i>
PG	J. Migne, <i>Patrologia graeca</i>
PL	J. Migne, <i>Patrologia latina</i>
RB	<i>Revue Biblique</i>
RBen	<i>Revue Bénédictine</i>
Rech	<i>Recherches bibliques</i>
RevScRel	<i>Revue de science religieuses</i>
RQ	<i>Revue de Qumran</i>
RSR	<i>Recherches de science religieuse</i>
RTP	<i>Revue de théologie et de philosophie</i>
SC	<i>Sources chrétiennes</i>
SPB	<i>Studia postbiblica</i>
TLZ	<i>Theologische Literaturzeitung</i>
TU	<i>Texte und Untersuchungen</i>
VC	<i>Vigiliae christianae</i>
VT	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup	<i>Vetus Testamentum, Supplements</i>
ZAW	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>

## Jerome's *Excerpta de psalterio*: a study in originality and methodology.

### Introduction

I first came across Saint Jerome's *Excerpta de psalterio* whilst studying the Hebrew Psalter and realised at once the importance of this little known and infrequently studied text. Owing to its late discovery<sup>1</sup> the text has received relatively little attention in the academic world. The body of text is slight in comparison with many other of Jerome's commentaries such as those on the books of Jeremiah or Ecclesiastes, and only discusses a few select passages from the Psalms, rather than being a complete treatise. Moreover, modern scholars such as Nautin and Peri have done much to outline Jerome's great debt to Origen for the content of this small commentary. This has led to the text being relatively untouched in both the fields of Patristics and of Hebrew philology. With the number of people learning Latin both at school and in further education becoming an ever decreasing reality, it seemed a most condign and even necessary task to undertake a translation of this work. By this I hoped to encourage interest in a text, which I believe is of great use and fascination to scholars and the world at large. In a similar way, it was Jerome's desire to bring to the Latin-speaking West of the fourth century an appreciation of the Hebrew text underlying the Latin and Greek Biblical texts. Saint Augustine, in his *De doctrina Christiana*<sup>2</sup>, advocates the necessary trilingualism for an understanding of the Bible:

"The men of the Latin race, for whom we write this, have need of both the other languages, Greek and Hebrew, for the knowledge of the divine

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<sup>1</sup> See. notes to G. Morin, *Anecdota Maredsolana*.

<sup>2</sup> Saint Augustine, *De doctrina Christiana*, 3.



scriptures; because, if there should arise any difficulty from the various translations of the Latin interpreters, let them have recourse to the first texts in which they were written”.

It is however, unreasonable to expect every reader to be fluent in these three languages, which is why Jerome does his best to explain the linguistic history of a text, without confusing the reader with too much specialist knowledge.

I have divided this study into three divisions. The first deals with the authorship and originality of the text itself, and the diverse claims of recent scholarship regarding Origen and Jerome's contribution to the *Excerpta*. The second part looks in detail at Jerome's method of exegesis, first in general, and then more specifically in the *Excerpta*, in an attempt to show how the work reflects the particular style of Jerome and not Origen. The third part seeks an appreciation of Saint Jerome's understanding of Hebrew, looking at evidence from the collected transliterations of Hebrew words found in the commentaries. As well as providing some interesting results in a hitherto understudied area, this shows how the *Excerpta* fits in to the grander scope of Jerome's commentaries, with an attention to the Hebrew text that is lacking to the same degree in Origen. The tabulated transliterated Hebrew forms, which are appended to this chapter, will, I hope, be of great use to other Patristic scholars interested in this field of study. This particular part of the research was inspired by and found direction in the words of Sutcliffe, who remarks that

“a complete treatise on Jerome's pronunciation of Hebrew would comprise both an account of the information he lets fall from time to time concerning various consonants and a study of his transliterations. This

latter, if complete, would involve an account of his vocalisation and this in turn a study of the Hebrew grammar this vocalisation represents. In the present paper an attempt is made to deal with the first of these subjects only, namely with the information imparted by Jerome's own remarks."<sup>3</sup>

With my third chapter I hope to have contributed to the second part of Sutcliffe's proposal, and to have opened the door, as well, to more diverse study of this fascinating text.

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<sup>3</sup> Sutcliffe, *St. Jerome's Pronunciation of Hebrew*. p.116

## i. Jerome and Origen: the authorship dispute.

It has been the tendency of recent studies into Jerome's *Excerpta de Psalterio* to concentrate for the most part on assessing the extent of Jerome's use of the Greek Father, Origen (c. 185-c. 254 C.E.), sometimes with the apparent intent of marking Jerome out as a plagiarist.<sup>1</sup> The emphasis of this research has until now been placed on the verification of the authorship of certain passages from the *Excerpta de Psalterio*, especially where parallels, which are particularly indicative of plagiarism, have been successfully drawn between Origen and Jerome.<sup>2</sup> Much research has been carried out along these lines, especially by Pierre Nautin<sup>3</sup> in 1977 and Vittorino Peri<sup>4</sup> in 1980 into the correct identification of Jerome's conjectured sources, that is Origen's *Enchiridion*, *tomi* and *omiliae* to which Jerome makes reference<sup>5</sup> in the preface to his *Excerpta*, with a view to establishing a clearer understanding of this dependence. There is no general consensus however as to the true identification of these sources, some of which are no longer extant, and there remains on the whole a general feeling of uncertainty regarding the extent of Jerome's use of Origen in the *Excerpta*, as can perhaps be inferred from J.Gribomont's indeterminate remark in the *Encyclopaedia of the Early Church* for the entry on the Book of Psalms, that the *Commentarioli in Psalmos* were "inspired by Origen".<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> E.g. Nautin's view of Jerome: "il ne craint pas de s'attribuer le mérite d'une interprétation qui appartenait à Origène en disant sans hésiter <et puto> pour dissimuler sa dépendance", *Origène*, p.284. See also V.Peri, *Omellie origiane sui Salmi* (Vatican City 1980), and S. BERGER, rec. a. S. Hieronymi *Tractatus sive homeliae in psalmos*, in *Marci Evangelium aliaque varia argumenta*, ed. G.MORIN (=Anecdota Maredsolana, t. III. Pars 2), Maredsous (Oxford, Parker) 1897, in *Bulletin Critique* 18 (1897) 512

<sup>2</sup> cf. Nautin, p.284f on the similarities between Jerome on Ps. 4 and the fragments of Origen on the *diapsalma*.

<sup>3</sup> NAUTIN, P.: *Origène*, I (Paris 1977)

<sup>4</sup> PERI, V.: 'Omellie origeniane sui salmi', *Studi e Testi* 289 (1980) 7-184

<sup>5</sup> *Comm.in Ps. prol.* (CCL.LXXII.177.18-20)

<sup>6</sup> BERADINO, A.D.: *Encyclopaedia of the Early Church* 2 vols. (Cambridge 1992) p.723

There is perhaps need then of a re-evaluation of the evidence in Jerome's defence, which I hope to provide in the present chapter. If it were the case that Jerome denied Origen's authorship in the *Excerpta*, whilst claiming it as wholly his own, then certainly his intentions in what is clearly an enterprise compiled from the works of Origen would seem truly dishonorable. There is, however, in the preface to the *Excerpta* a manifest attribution to Origen, with clear indication moreover of Jerome's intention to compile passages from the *tomi* or *omiliae*, and to include alongside them his own comments, which can be said to excuse him from the apparent accusation of plagiarism suggested by modern scholars.<sup>7</sup> Numerous examples have been produced, nevertheless, of instances where Jerome's interpretation resembles very closely that of Origen, yet Jerome offers no admission of his source, and even propounds it to be his own<sup>1</sup>. A good example of this is found in Nautin's comparison between a fragment of Origen's *On the diapsalma* and Jerome on Psalm 4:

*Origen: Fragment sur le diapsalma*

...aux endroits où l'hébreu a SEL... on a dans les Septante, Théodotion et Symmaque, <<diapsalma>>, et au lieu de ce mot chez Aquila..., <<toujours>>... Les traducteurs ont-ils écrit <<diapsalma>> à cause d'un membre de phrase musicale, d'un changement de rythme, ou pour un autre motif, à toi d'y réfléchir

*Jérôme*

Verbum SELA Septuaginta interpretes, Symmachus et Theodotion <<diapsalma>> transtulerunt, Aquila vero <<semper>>; et puto aut musici cuiusdam soni esse signaculum...<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> *Comm.in Ps. prol.* (CCL.LXXII.177,18-20)

<sup>8</sup> See Nautin, *Origène*, p. 284 for a fuller discussion of this example and others.

The similarity between the two passages is clear, but perhaps it is worth remembering that Jerome's technique, (as will be discussed in the following chapter) lends much to the similarity: that is in most cases of exegesis Jerome cites the Seventy translators, Symmachus, Theodotion and Aquila, usually in this order, before giving his own personal opinion. In my opinion this quite rigid form is likely to coincide with certain passages of Origen, because it contains all four sources of the same sources, but this does not necessarily point to a direct translation from that one text. Under these circumstances Jerome's debt to Origen is indisputable, his reliance on him demonstrable, but his honesty questionable. The following is a summation and discussion of the recent research findings:

One of the primary causes of some of the past confusion concerning the authorship of the *Excerpta* has been the variety of appellations assigned to the work and the subsequent difficulty in the authentication of any one title. The appellations that have come down to us are numerous: *excerpta de psalterio* (the codex Spinaliensis 68, E; codex Parisinus 1862, M; codex Parisinus 1863, A), *enchiridion in psalmis* (codex Gratonopolitanus 218, C), *breviarium in Psalmos* (Migne XXVI, 871-1346), and *commentarioli in psalmos* (Morin, *Anecdota Maredsolana*), as well as Jerome's own use of the term *commentariolum* in the preface to the *Excerpta*. The first of these is that which has been employed throughout for the purposes of this work, except in those instances where it has been cited by others, including Jerome himself. The second, *enchiridion in psalmis* stems from Jerome's avowal in the preface that the inspiration for the work was Origen's *Enchiridion*. It comes as no surprise in view of this uncertainty to find that the various attempts that have been made to identify the *Excerpta* with works of Origen have centred upon the connections with certain of his works of similar nomenclature: both Nautin and later Peri, each working by different

methods of deduction, have come to a similar conclusion, primarily stating that the *Excerpta de psalterio* of Jerome find some derivation from Origen's *Excerpta in totum psalterium*. This conclusion has been reached on one part because of the history of the *Excerpta*'s title. Nautin has reconstructed the Greek title attributed to the original work of Origen and renders it as being *Semeioseis eis to psalterion*,<sup>9</sup> which, he proposes, corresponds to the Latin translation of *Excerpta in psalterium* or as it was to become later, *Excerpta de psalterio* (the latter being better Latin phraseology than the former more literal translation of the Greek). Nautin's reasoning can furthermore be traced in the explanation of Jerome himself in the *Commentary on Isaiah*, in which he equates the *Excerpta* with the *scholia* or *semeioseis*, which, he says, "nos *excerpta* possumus appellare".<sup>10</sup> Thus Nautin believes that the truth as to the origin of the text of Jerome can be discovered by following through the history of the change of its title from the Origen's Greek into Latin, and then into Jerome's particular phraseology. Although this argument is very interesting, it is not wholly convincing, especially as it hangs the authorship of the whole document on a reconstructed history of the title. More importantly, if a connection is to be made between the Latin title of the *Excerpta* and a Greek title of Origen's work, a likely candidate would be Origen's *Eklogai*, a word which like *Excerpta* carries the idea of 'picking out', 'selecting' passages.

Peri, working rather more by elimination, has added that the *Excerpta* also cannot be founded upon the *Enchiridion* of Origen, because of the incongruity of their respective treatment of the Psalter: the *Enchiridion*, (lit. 'handbook') traditionally only contained interpretations of Psalms of particular interest<sup>11</sup>, and was not a comprehensive treatise such as were the *Tractatus*. Jerome refers to the *Excerpta* on

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<sup>9</sup> Nautin, *Origène*, p.259.

<sup>10</sup> Hier., *Comm. in Is. Prophetam*, Prol. (PL. 24, 21A)



the other hand in the preface as "hunc angustum commentariolum"<sup>12</sup>, in the *singular*, which perhaps suggests rather a more self-contained and comprehensive treatment of the subject matter, (akin to his numerous other *Commentaries*), than a set of selected notes, as is suggested by the appellation *Excerpta*, (i.e. 'extracts'). The argument is further complicated, though, by the word *commentariolus* itself, which appears more frequently in the plural than in the singular in works of Jerome.<sup>13</sup> Were it the case that it appeared more in the singular then Jerome's use of it here could possibly be attributed to a trend in usage, but this is not the case. This suggests that Jerome consciously chose the singular to convey the message of a more unified commentary than a set of unconnected passages.

First Batiffol<sup>14</sup>, and later Cadiou<sup>15</sup> also support Nautin and Peri's argument that the *Enchiridion* is doubtful as the origin of the *Excerpta*'s source. They argue that there are clearly two classes of Origen's *Eklogai* mentioned in the works of Jerome: the first being the commentaries or tomes, which extend only from Psalm 1 to 15; and the second are classed alongside the Homilies, which concern the treatment of the whole Psalter. And therefore, due to that fact that Origen's *Excerpta in totum psalterio* do not concern the *whole* Psalter, yet treat more than just the first fifteen Psalms, they cannot be said to correspond to any of the mentioned classifications of works of Origen, that is the *skolia* (or commentaries), *tomai*, or *homeliai*.<sup>16</sup> Jerome's admission of the use of Origen's *tomi* or *omiliae* then in the preface cannot be in reference to the *Excerpta in totum psalterium*.

<sup>11</sup> Peri, p.16: "...l'*Enchiridion*, in altre parole, non era certamente *in totum psalterium*".

<sup>12</sup> Hier. *Comm. in Ps. prol.*20, (CCL LXXII, 178)

<sup>13</sup> In the works of Jerome the word *commentariolus* appears at least nine times in the singular, (a good example is found in *Epist.* 149.1), but over nineteen times in the plural. (Source: frequency provided by digital version of *Patrologia Latina*)

<sup>14</sup> Batiffol, 'Notes d'ancienne littérature chrétienne. L'*Enchiridion* d'Origène', *Revue Biblique* 7 (1898) 265-269; see also Peri. p.17.

<sup>15</sup> Cadiou, *Commentaires inédits des psaumes*, p. 32, n.2.

<sup>16</sup> Peri. p.17.

The result of this research has led to an inability to assign any one individual text as the exclusive source behind the *Excerpta* of Jerome. This is so even in spite of the numerous similarities between the *Excerpta* of Jerome and each of the works of Origen mentioned above. It is far more plausible to believe, I would suggest, that Jerome had access and recourse to each of the works of Origen cited above, and had them in front of him while writing the *Excerpta*, and doubtless copied passages from each, though depending on none exclusively. This argument is based upon the various trips, which Jerome mentions having taken to the library of Caesarea, where he was able to read these sources.<sup>17</sup> Peri is very keen to endorse this conjecture in light of the similarities that he has found between the works:

"Se ne ricava che le coincidenze di materia tra le lettere romane di Gerolamo ed il *Commentariolus*, con il prezioso corollario cronologico che dobbiamo al Nautin, sono indicative non tanto del fatto che evidentemente a quell'epoca Gerolamo conosceva già l'*Enchiridion*, quanto di quello che aveva sotto mano i commentari ai salmi e le omelie sui salmi, da cui dichiara di trarre le sue integrazioni."<sup>18</sup>

Thus he concludes that Jerome not only knew but was probably in possession of Origen's *Commentaries* as well as his *Homelies on the Psalms*, at the time when he was producing his own *Excerpta*, and that through this reasoning the influence of both can be seen in the *Excerpta de Psalterio*.

The authoritative work of Vittorino Peri on the parallels between Origen and Jerome, in particular with reference to the *Tractatus in Psalmos* and their Origenist

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<sup>17</sup> See Kelly, p.135.

<sup>18</sup> Peri, p.16



derivation, describes certain methods that were employed to recognise the Origenist passages in Jerome in the absence of any attribution. Amongst others, two methods stand out as being particularly interesting in light of their potential use where the source document is believed to be non-extant, such as in the case of the *Excerpta*. They will be discussed briefly here because of the issues that they raise concerning the textual background, and because at first sight they would appear to be of potential use in discovering those passages of the *Excerpta*, which are of Origen's authorship. The first method is attributed to Berger<sup>19</sup>, who discovered the references to the Greek Church calendar in Jerome's *Tractatus*, rather than the Latin calendar as would be expected from a reading of Jerome's other works. The basis for this argument is that Jerome would naturally have made comparison with or reference to the proceedings and ceremonies of the Latin Church, to which he was more accustomed, rather than to the practice of the Greek Church, as was in use in the Eastern regions of the Roman Empire in the late fourth century. Although this method would seem to offer some insight into the textual authorship problem, in practice it can provide little use in the case of the *Excerpta*. This is on account of two reasons: there are no explicit references to the *practices* of the Church in the *Excerpta*, which could be seen as pertaining to either the Greek or Latin Church; and furthermore it is important to note that Jerome had been resident in Bethlehem for a period of over four years by the time he wrote the *Tractatus in Psalmos*,<sup>20</sup> during which period he had also been travelling around the Fertile Crescent between Nitria in Egypt and Antioch with Paula and Eustochium<sup>21</sup>. This means that he would have been just as familiar with the practice of the Greek Church as of the Latin. Furthermore the practice of his local Church at

<sup>19</sup> S. BERGER, rec. a. S. Hieronymi *Tractatus sive homeliae in psalmos, in Marci Evangelium aliaque varia argumenta*, ed. G. MORIN (=Anecdota Maredsolana, t. III. Pars 2), Maredsous (Oxford, Parker) 1897, in *Bulletin Critique* 18 (1897) 512-518

<sup>20</sup> Kelly, p. 129; Cavallera: *Saint Jérôme, sa vie, son oeuvre* (Louvain, 1922) I. p.149, II. p.30 / 157

Bethlehem had become, in Berger's words, "plus ou moins orientale, qu'elle est...rapprochée de celle de l'Eglise grecque"<sup>22</sup>. Berger also asserts that this would have made the practices and documents of Jerome's Church at Bethlehem extremely similar to those of Eusebius of Caesarea, and more importantly to those of Origen.<sup>23</sup> It is necessary to remember that Jerome was writing for an audience based not in the East, where he was situated, but more commonly in Rome, as is the case for Blesilla (Commentary on Ecclesiastes), Paula and Eustochium, or Pope Damasus, an audience that was already familiar with Latin church practice, but possibly needed Greek practice explained. Berger's argument is founded rather weakly on the evidence of what Jerome omits from the commentaries, and because the quantity of such examples is usually slight, it is unwise to base such a conclusion on the few examples found. Therefore if any references to Church practice can be extrapolated from the *Excerpta* then their identification as either Greek or Latin Church practice, is not conclusive to the establishment of authorship.

The other method, described fully in Peri's *Omellie origeniane sui salmi*, concentrates on proving the act of translation by searching for linguistic aspects of the Latin text, which indicate without a doubt an original Greek document, from which the Latin was translated. These aspects of language, such as unusual use of prepositions, style, vocabulary, and sentence-structure for example, can all be used as evidence in substantiating the text as a translation from Greek. Peri explains the method in this way:

"approfondendo il problema, troppo sbrigativamente affrontato ed accantonato dal Morin, si è condotti a riconoscere nel testo dei Tractatus

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<sup>21</sup> Kelly, p.116f

<sup>22</sup> Berger, 516

una traduzione dal greco: non solo per il ricorso lungo tutta l'opera di grecismi di ogni genere e di costruzioni tipicamente elleniche, quanto per il frequente riferimento del commentatore a vocaboli greci e a citazioni dal greco dei Settanta...<sup>24</sup>

This method too, however, does not seem to be of particular use in the case of the *Excerpta* for a number of reasons. The presence of Grecisms in a text does not necessarily indicate that the Latin text is a translation, and perhaps is due more to the author's style of writing, their vocabulary and target audience, than to the existence of a Greek source. Moreover no examples of Grecisms have been discovered to date, and there is certainly not the same profusion of evidence by this method for a Greek translation here as there is in the *Tractatus*. In fact there seems to be little evidence at all that the *Excerpta* is a wholesale translation from a Greek text, though as Nautin has pointed out certain passages are, without a doubt, translations or paraphrases of Origen<sup>25</sup>. Jerome himself explains in the preface to the *Excerpta* that the work is a compendium of passages from Origen, in particular of passages too that he thought 'worthy of study'<sup>26</sup>. This very fact, constituting an admission of the use of Origen, should free Jerome from any such allegations of plagiarism, since he does not claim authority over the entire work. It is furthermore only to be expected that, as is the custom found in all preceding Commentaries of Jerome, he compiles what he considers to be the most significant interpretations of other earlier and contemporary commentators, whether they be Greek, Latin or Jewish, alongside his own, without always affirming his source. (We cannot expect modern requirements of

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<sup>23</sup> Peri. p.73

<sup>24</sup> Peri. p.174.

<sup>25</sup> Nautin, *Origène*, p.284

<sup>26</sup> Hier. *Comm. in Ps. prol.* 11, (CCL LXXII, 178)

acknowledgement to be present in fourth and fifth century commentaries). It is true to say that the *Excerpta* in this way resembles his previous commentaries in style, method and composition, and that if he does, at times, pass off others' explanations of the verses as his own, then he is at least being consistent throughout the gamut of Commentaries and not just in the *Excerpta*. Nautin supports this argument, especially in view of Jerome's characteristic method of exegesis, and also in spite of Jerome's most humble pretence in the preface of having merely translated passages of Origen:

"Jérôme, qui prend cet ouvrage [sc. *Enchiridion*] pour modèle..., se défend toutefois d'en avoir fait une simple traduction. Il prétend même n'avoir consigné dans son ouvrage que de choses qu'il aurait lues dans les autres oeuvres d'Origène sur le psautier...Je ne doute pas qu'il ait donné ici et là des interprétations ou remarques personnelles"<sup>27</sup>.

This view is also held by Jay regarding the translation which Jerome made from Origen's *Homilies on the Psalms*, and reasons that "il y a donc tout lieu de voir dans nos sept *Tractatus in psalmos* non une traduction, mais une oeuvre personnelle de Jérôme".<sup>28</sup> Before we turn to these "interprétations ou remarques personnelles", which will be dealt with in more detail later, it will be of use to examine some of the accusations made against Jerome by his contemporaries concerning his work on the Psalter, his awareness of the claims, and their refutation.

During the dispute over Origenism, which had arisen between Jerome and his boyhood friend Rufinus around the year 393, Jerome finds it necessary to list in his defence his predecessors in the act of making translations directly from Origen, and

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<sup>27</sup> Nautin, *Origène*, p.283

<sup>28</sup> Jay, *Combien Jérôme a-t-il traduit d'homélies d'Origène?* p.137

compiling his works together with his own: he defends himself against Rufinus' claim of hypocrisy, saying, "ego non accusavi quare Origenem pro voluntate transtuleris: hoc enim et ipse feci, et ante me Victorinus, Hilarius Ambrosiusque fecerunt".<sup>29</sup> Rufinus had already accused Jerome of tampering with the sacred Septuagintal text, and lashed at him for reading pagan literature and tutoring the local children of his monastery in the pagan authors<sup>30</sup>, but this accusation concerning his use of Origen cut to the heart of Jerome's exegetical technique: his *dependence* upon the works of Origen. Until the year 393 however both men had been dutiful adherents to the writings of Origen, and Jerome's reverence for him was clear. He esteemed Origen's work most highly, and this can be seen from his undisguised elation upon finding Origen's twenty-five Books on the Minor Prophets at the library of Caesarea. He professes himself to be as lucky as a man who owns the treasure of Croesus.<sup>31</sup> This reverence, though, did not preclude him, it seems, from using Origen's interpretations in his own works. In fact Jerome's technique in the *Commentaries* seems to be more one of preservation of diverse interpretations, than of originality, for he couldn't presume that the reader had access to the works of Origen, as he did. As has already been pointed out, however, Jerome is not furtive in his use of Origen, but rather frankly admits to using him as his principal source. It is especially in his earlier commentaries that Jerome is unafraid to admit openly his borrowings from Origen: in the commentaries on *Philemon*, *Galatians*, *Ephesians*, and the *Epistle to Titus*, written around the year 387/8, there is clear evidence that they are all largely compilations from earlier exegetes, as Jerome himself avows, in particular Origen.<sup>32</sup> The numerous

<sup>29</sup> Hier. *Apolog. Adversus libros Rufini*, III, 14 (PL 23, 488D)

<sup>30</sup> Ruf. *Apol. c. Hier.* 2, 4-8.

<sup>31</sup> Hier. *De Viris Illustribus* 75

<sup>32</sup> Cf. prol. to *Comm. in Galat.* and *Comm. in Ephes.*, in which he acknowledges his debt to Origen 'in part', as well as having the commentaries of Didymus and Apollinarius in his mind whilst he was dictating.

fragments of Origen's commentary on Ephesians which survive point to Jerome's extensive use of Origen in this Commentary, and J.A.F. GREGG's reconstructed text of Origen's fragments shows parallel passages in the two authors.<sup>33</sup> In the *Commentary on Habbakuk*<sup>34</sup>, too, one interpretation can be seen to correspond very closely to Origen's *In Ies. Nave hom.* 15. 5.<sup>35</sup> The works of Jerome during these few years received much criticism from Rufinus in particular regarding the 'blind' way in which Origen's ideas were incorporated into Jerome's work.<sup>36</sup> All of these examples are included to show Jerome's manifest devotion to and enthusiasm for Origen, prior to the Origenist dispute.<sup>37</sup>

As Jerome's works progress however, and Origenism becomes a topic of greater altercation, there is a certain change in treatment of Origen's theology in Jerome's Commentaries: though his reliance does not seem to decrease, his blind acceptance of Origen does however become more sparse. In his *Commentary on Haggai* I. 13. Jerome quickly takes up the argument of Origen that John the Baptist was in fact an angel in human form, but the theory is then abandoned with much the same swiftness.<sup>38</sup> By the time Jerome has come to write the *Commentary on Jonah* in 396 he rejects certain of Origen's theories, though it seems probable that Jerome used Origen's interpretations to form his contrary opinions. For example on Jonah 2, 7, he rejects the idea that the body of the resurrection will be the same as the natural body; on Jonah 4, 10 he discards the Origenist subordination of the second person of the Trinity; on Jonah 3, 6 he argues against the theory that the Devil will be saved in the

<sup>33</sup> *JTS* 3 (1902) 233-44; 398-420; 554-576

<sup>34</sup> *Comm. in Abac.* 3, 14. (CCL 76A: 658)

<sup>35</sup> *Orig. In Ies. Nave hom.* 15. 5. (GCS 30. 389f)

<sup>36</sup> He is also reprimanded for the occasions where his indebtedness goes beyond his acknowledgement to Origen. (See Kelly. p.145 & HASTINGS, J.: *Dictionary of the Bible*, extra vol. (1904) 493-495.)

<sup>37</sup> For a full list of places where Origen's influence can be seen in the background to Jerome interpretation see GRUTZMACHER II. 115-118.

<sup>38</sup> (CCL 76A: 751)



consummation of the world.<sup>39</sup> And in the Preface to the *Commentary on Malachi*, written later in the year 406 Jerome rejects Origen's views regarding fallen souls. Jerome's refutations of Origen become more and more harsh it seems, as in the *Commentary on Malachi* he claims that Origen "almost completely neglected the history, and as he is accustomed, is concerned with allegorical interpretation".<sup>40</sup> Similarly in the *Commentary on Ezechiel* he attacks Origen's heterodox interpretations<sup>41</sup>.

At the time of writing the *Excerpta* in around 391 Jerome was still in great favour of utilising Origen as his primary reservoir of information, and he finds it necessary once again to refute comments that he merely compiles Origen's works in the Preface to the *Commentary on Micah*, written just a year later in 392. In his *Apology*, too, he argues that it is in fact the customary practice of commentators to include the interpretations of other authors in their work alongside their own.<sup>42</sup> As has been noted earlier Jerome makes reference to other Commentators who have used Origen's interpretations without incurring the same acerbic criticism: in *Epist.* 112, 4 and 6. Jerome informs Augustine that he had followed Origen in his work and notes some others who had done likewise previous to him: Didymus the Blind, Apollinarius, Eusebius of Emessa, Theodore of Heraclea, and John Chrysostom. In this particular case the moot point is the avowal of St. Paul that he rebuked St. Peter for having eaten with the Gentiles, (for the act of eating with the Gentiles was considered ill-conduct under the Jewish law) and Jerome's argument, taken from Origen, claims that there is little difference between the two Apostles either in principle or in effect.<sup>43</sup> Similarly

<sup>39</sup> Cf. also *Commentary on Daniel* 3, 95f. (CCL 75A: 644) for the same argument.

<sup>40</sup> (CCL 76A: 941-2)

<sup>41</sup> (CCL 75: 143; 302-3; 492)

<sup>42</sup> Hier. *Apol.* 3, 11.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Kelly p.148

he argues in his *Commentary on Micah* that Hilary of Poitiers also borrowed freely from the works of Origen in his *Homilies on the Psalms*.<sup>44</sup>

In conclusion then Jerome's refutation of plagiarism is supported by his definition of the commentary form, claiming that it allows him to use freely interpretations originally expounded by other commentators. Moreover the accusations made against Jerome, in particular those made by Rufinus, seem to originate in the controversy over Origen which mark the years from 393 onwards, two years after Jerome had compiled the *Excerpta*, and therefore must be seen in the correct context: although Jerome is accused of wholesale plagiarism from Origen, it is unclear whether the force behind such accusations was the pursuit of recognition for Origen's work in Jerome, or rather the declamation of Jerome for having followed Origen's controversial doctrines. From a modern perspective, too, in the present lack of existence of the probable source documents it is extremely difficult to assess the exact extent of the debt of Jerome to Origen's work on the Psalter, but nevertheless a definite correspondence has been shown to exist between passages of the *Excerpta* and fragments of Origen. On this basis attempts have been made to see the *Excerpta* as a direct translation from a Greek source, after the pattern of the *Tractatus*, but the evidence, (or rather lack of evidence) shows this to be improbable. There is more cause for regarding the *Excerpta* as having been compiled by Jerome from numerous sources, admittedly with a self-avowed primary dependence on Origen, but certainly not an exclusive dependence. Whilst previous studies have concentrated wholly upon the Origenist traits of the work, this study will endeavor to examine more the facets of the *Excerpta*, particularly of technique and content, which exhibit the mark of Jerome's hand.

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<sup>44</sup> *Commentary on Micah* II prol. (CCL 76: 480); *Encyclopaedia of the Early Church*, p.382.



## ii. Jerome's Psalter Text

Even before we can begin to examine the body of the commentary of the *Excerpta* we must look at the text of the Psalter which Jerome incorporated into his work, and inquire whether comparison can be drawn between this and any other Psalter versions, and by this method we should hope to show which source Jerome has drawn upon, (and whether there is only one or several), and whether Jerome has deviated in his Psalter text of the *Excerpta* from the other versions in any way, and the reasons for which he has done this. Given that Jerome does not comment on the whole Psalter we are not fortunate enough to have a complete text of the Psalms to use in a comparison. However there is quantity enough certainly to make adequate inquiry into a comparison between this text and the other Psalm versions. In the process of this research it became clear that a complete study of all textual variants in the Psalter would be unfeasible. For the purposes of this study, therefore, a small sample has been taken from Psalms one to ten, (see Appendix for a complete list of textual variations), which in my opinion is representative of the whole text and it shows enough diversity for me to decide whether one principal text has been used, or if it is different from any of the known Psalter versions, which would suggest a new translation.

These examples have been taken from various sources: the Septuagint readings have been taken from RAHLFS' *Septuaginta* and from F.FIELD's *Origenis Hexaplorum quae supersunt*; the readings of Symmachus, Theodotion and Aquila also from FIELD; the Old Latin, RO and GA from the *Quincuplex Psalterium* (Lefèvre

d'Étaples) and along with the HE from Weber's *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Latinam Vulgatam Versionem* and C.Evans' *Notes on the Psalter*.

#### **i. The Old Latin Version or Vetus Itala (OL)**

The exact origins of the Old Latin Version(s) are still shrouded in great uncertainty. The general opinion is divided between contentions that there was originally one version, and equally that there were several simultaneously current versions in circulation. It is generally accepted by Estin however that before the close of the second century there existed at least one complete version of the whole Bible, which was based upon the Septuagintal text and Greek manuscripts. It was in any event this version which Jerome revised on the basis of the Septuagint translation at the behest of Pope Damasus in 384 to form the *Psalterium Romanum*. There is also evidence to suggest that some of the Old Latin versions might have been made from Hebrew, especially, as we shall see, where the OL is closer to the Hebrew than the LXX text. The main concern then in the use of this source is that because there was no one Old Latin version, there may be places where some manuscripts support my argument, and others do not. The forms from the Old Latin though are different enough in most cases from the RO and GA to give insight into the variant readings that were circulating in Jerome's time.

## ii. The *Psalterium Romanum* (RO)

This Psalter has been attributed to Jerome since the Middle Ages but this has been a subject of dispute in the studies of the last twenty years.<sup>45</sup> The authorship of the versions is not of prime significance for this study however, as it is the relationship of the text to that of the *Excerpta* which is to be identified, not the author. It is difficult to assign any date to the RO for several reasons. Firstly the appellation of *Psalterium Romanum* only came about in the ninth century when distinction was necessary from the *Psalterium Gallicanum*, and there is a good possibility that the present text is not actually that of the Psalter produced at Rome in 384, but one that is very much like it. Even if it is not the exact version from 384 it still provides alternate readings to compare. Lastly the text has no preface, which is customary in the works of Jerome and often aids substantially in the text's datation. An estimation of 383-4 however has been proposed by Kelly<sup>46</sup>. Estin has conjectured that the text is earlier than the *Psalterium Gallicanum*, seeing it as a transitional stage in the development of the Psalter text between the old Latin Psalters and the *Psalterium Gallicanum*.

## iii. The *Psalterium Gallicanum* (GA)

The *Psalterium Gallicanum*<sup>47</sup> appears to have been first worked on in 388 according to Cavallera's estimate<sup>48</sup> and the evidence from Jerome's preface, which points to Jerome's stay in Rome:

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<sup>45</sup> Especially in the work of Dom. De. Bruyne *Le Problème du Psautier Romain*, Revue Bénédictine. XLII (1930), pp. 101-126.

<sup>46</sup> Kelly, p.89

<sup>47</sup> The name originates in the manuscript's widespread acceptance and use in Gaul, and its subsequent adoption as the authoritative version during the pontificate of Pius V (1566-1572), in contrast to the *Psalterium Romanum*, which was restricted in use to St. Peter's in Rome.

'Psalterium Romae dudum positus emenderam et iuxta Septuaginta  
interpretes, licet cursim, magna illud ex parte correxeram.'<sup>49</sup>

and then again a second revision was made between 389 and 392 which is the version adopted in the Vulgate by Alcuin. Jerome's intention in the work was clearly to create a new Latin Psalter which was representative of the *Graeca veritas*. It is in no way, however, a translation from the Septuagint text, but rather a correction (emendatio) of the previous Old Latin Psalters in accordance with the Septuagintal text.<sup>50</sup>

#### iv. The *Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos* (HE)

The *Psalterium Gallicanum* stands in direct contrast to the *Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos*, which seems to have been produced in 392 (or slightly before). Here the intention was to create a text which remained true to the *Hebraica veritas*, but this does not necessarily indicate an immediate recourse to the Hebrew text, as might be assumed from the commentaries of this period. The title '*iuxta Hebraeos*' is representative, too, of Jerome's recourse to the Greek translators, whom he uses almost as standard in his commentary works: the Three, (that is Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion), as well as the authors of the Quinta and Sexta editions. For the title literally means, 'according to the Hebrews', and not as it is often translated, 'according to the Hebrew'. It is possible that the three translators cited above, although writing in

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<sup>48</sup> F. Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme, sa vie et son oeuvre*, I, t.1, Louvain, 1922, p.84

<sup>49</sup> BIBLIA SACRA IUXTA LATINAM VULGATAM VERSIONEM *ad Codicum fidem iussu Pii PP. XII cura et studio monachorum abbatiae pontificiae sancti Hieronymi in Urbe O.S.B. edita*. X Liber Psalmorum..., Romae, 1953. p.3

Greek, are the 'Hebrew' referred to in the title, in light of their work on the Hebrew texts. However, there is more evidence in the text of the translation to show that at some point Jerome has indeed looked at the Hebrew text of the Psalter and has 'corrected' his Greek texts to agree with the original Hebrew. Only at this stage in 392 is Jerome finally getting to grips with the Hebrew truth that he has been searching for, and is able to make great textual changes to the previous Greek dominated translations. Estin sees this *Hebraica veritas* therefore as in fact "une vérité grecque deuxième manière transmise par plusieurs témoins, dont les versions ne s'accordent pas nécessairement entre elles".<sup>51</sup>

#### v. The *Excerpta de Psalterio* (Ex)

The text of the *Excerpta* however, which was written somewhere between 389 and 392, is often the subject of emendations by Jerome in the commentary text where he reviews the actual Hebrew text, (as will be discussed in a later chapter) and therefore perhaps shows a different technique and intent altogether from that of the *Vetus Latina*, *Psalterium Romanum*, *Psalterium Gallicanum* and *Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos*. According to its present dating, the *Excerpta* should therefore post-date all but the HE, and this should be visible to some extent in the differences between the texts. A number of specific textual variations have been chosen here from instances where the versions do not concur on a single reading, or where they display readings of interest. This would, one might expect, according to the chronology, show a progression from the OL, through the RO and GA towards the HE. The versions of Aquila, Symmachus

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<sup>50</sup> For a discussion of the evidence see C. Estin p.29.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid. p.29-30

and Theodotion have also been noted where appropriate in an attempt to uncover the source of the *Excerpta* text.

#### vi. The Septuagint (LXX)

As with the Old Latin, the principal problem with using the Septuagint sources is that there are several manuscript traditions that have been preserved. This means that in certain cases there are at least two readings, which have been recorded here. It is also difficult, for the same reason, to date the Septuagintal readings.

#### Legend

Ex = *Excerpta*; OL= *Vetus Itala*; RO=*Psalterium Romanum*; GA= *Psalterium Gallicanum*; HE= *Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos*; LXX=Septuagint; A=Aquila; Σ=Symmachus; Θ=Theodotion; MT=Masoretic Text; GrkV=Other Greek Versions (from Hexapla)

#### 1. Psalm 1.1

Ex	:	pestilentium
OL	:	pestilientiae
RO	:	pestilientiae
GA	:	pestilientiae
HE	:	derisorum
LXX	:	λοιμῶν
A	:	χλευαστῶν
Σ	:	επιθετῶν
MT	:	נִצְחֵי

The *Excerpta* reading proves problematical because it seems to be the neuter plural of *pestilens*, which is not very commonly found. It is found twice in Jerome's Commentary on Jeremiah, and once each in the Commentary on Ezechiel, the Commentary on Hosea, and in the Commentary on Amos. Here the *Excerpta* text seems to be based upon the LXX version, representing the plural rather than the

singular, which is shown in the OL, RO and GA. This is supported by Jerome's translation of λομοί in the Septuagint for 1 Macc. 15.3 with the word *pestilens* in the Vulgate. HE *derisorum* seems to represent Aquila's γλευαστων ('mockers'). It is interesting to note that the singular 'pestilentie' does not seem to have a basis in any of the Greek versions or the MT, which clearly also has 'mockers'.

## 2. Psalm 2.12: adprehendite disciplinam

Ex	:	adprehendite disciplinam
OL	:	adprehendite disciplinam
RO	:	adprehendite disciplinam
GA	:	adprehendite disciplinam
HE	:	adorate pure
LXX	:	δραξασθε παιδειας
A	:	καταφιλησατε εκλεκτως
Σ	:	προσκυνησατε καθαρω
MT	:	בְּרִשְׁוֹן־בָּר

The OL is identical to that of the RO and the GA which both concord with the *Excerpta*. Here we can also see the relationship of HE to Symmachus's text and to Aquila's version. (Aquila's choice of ἐκλεκτως is interesting as it is a relatively uncommon word, also found in Aquila's rendition of Ps 64 (65).14, where it translates the word בָּר). The *Excerpta* text shows definite origin in that of the LXX, and one is led to wonder whether the Septuagint's δραξασθε is a corruption of a possible form διδαξατε. The form παιδειας is also very close to the Hebrew בָּר (son), which might indicate a very literal translation from the Hebrew to Greek. The source for the *Excerpta* reading then could come from either the OL, RO, GA, or the LXX, and it does not show signs of having been altered to agree with the Hebrew text. The HE too seems closer to Aquila and Symmachus's readings than to the Hebrew.



### 3. Psalm 2.12: de via recta

Ex	:	de via recta
OL	:	de via iusta
RO	:	de via iusta
GA	:	de via iusta
HE	:	de via
LXX	:	ἐξ οδοῦ δικαιοσύνης
A + Σ:	:	-
MT	:	דרך

In this example the three versions of the OL, RO and GA seem to have been drawn from the LXX, whence the *Excerpta* also seems to originate. Only the HE shows a similar reading to the MT in the absence of the adjective, although it cannot be known if this absence is intentional or due to scribal error. The alteration from the term *iusta* to *recta* perhaps shows evidence of a revision of the Psalter, although it is difficult to know whether this is something that Jerome did himself. Nonetheless, the *Excerpta* text clearly still relies on either the Greek or the previous Latin versions and not the MT.

### 4. Psalm 4.8

Ex	:	a fructu frumenti et vini eorum repleti sunt
OL	:	a tempore frumenti vini et olei sui multiplicati sunt
RO	:	a fructu frumenti et vini et olei sui multiplicati sunt
GA	:	a fructu frumenti et vini eorum repleti sunt
HE	:	in tempore frumentum et vinum eorum multiplicata sunt
LXX	:	ἀπο καρπῶν/καιροῦ σιτοῦ καὶ ἐλαίου αὐτῶν ἐπληθύνθησαν
A, Σ, Θ:	:	ἀπο καιροῦ σιτοῦ καὶ ἐλαίου αὐτῶν ἐπληθύνθησαν
MT	:	מַעַת דָּגָנָם וְתִירוֹשָׁם רַבּוּ
Qumran (and Syriac):	:	וַיִּצְהָרֻם

It seems probable from this example that both the OL and the HE reflect the translations of Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion, or the LXX, owing to their choice of 'tempore'. As was mentioned earlier there is a difficulty here in that the Septuagint has multiple readings in the manuscripts, which support both the 'fructu' and 'tempore' readings. The Hebrew supports rather more ἀπο καιροῦ with מַעַת ('from the time of'), although the readings from the Peshitta and Qumran show a correspondence to the OL



and RO where ויצהרם has been represented by *olei sui*. The *Excerpta* version could then originate equally in the forms of the GA, RO, and possibly from one of the Septuagint readings, but in light of the GA and Ex being identical, it seems probable that this is the source.

## 5. Psalm 5.9

Ex :	in conspectu meo
OL :	in conspectu tuo
RO :	in conspectu meo
GA :	in conspectu tuo
HE :	ante faciam meam
LXX :	ἐνώπιον μου + ἐνώπιον σου
A + Σ:	-
MT :	לפני

Here the GA, OL and LXX seem to corroborate the existence of the 2ms suffix, which is found in two manuscripts attested in BHS (*Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*). The source then underlying one LXX form and the GA clearly had this suffix. Note here that there are again multiple LXX readings found in the manuscripts: the Codex Vaticanus (Rom. Bibl. Vat; Vat, graec. 1209; circa IVth century) has μου, but the Codex Alexandrinus (London. Brit. Nat. Royal. 1.d.v-viii; circa Vth century) has σου. The differences are quite understandable as originating in scribal error, given that it does not take much to convert a capitalised mu (M) to a sigma (Σ). From a contextual argument, too, it seems sensible to read 'my', because the voice of the Psalmist is addressing the Lord, and the previous line, as well, reads, 'because of my enemies', (למען שוירי). The HE shows an altogether different reading in what appears to be a literal translation of the MT. The *Excerpta* text and the RO show an intermediate form, which does not seem to have the same reading as the GA, OL and LXX, but which resembles more the MT. However it appears a possibility that here Jerome's

*Excerpta* text is based upon the RO version, since the OL and GA, which share the same word *conspectu* have 'tuo', and not 'meo'.

#### 6. Psalm 6.8

Ex	:	a furore
OL	:	ab ira
RO	:	prae ira
GA	:	a furore
HE	:	prae amaritudine
LXX + A:	:	απο παροργισμου
Σ	:	απο πικρασμου
MT	:	אֲרַגְזָנִי

In this case the *Excerpta* text shows a clear coincidence with the GA form, which itself reflects the versions of the LXX and Aquila. The OL and RO seem to be based upon these Greek versions as well, and the HE reflects the πικρασμου, ('bitterness') in Symmachus' version. It is difficult to know if any of the Latin translation have been made directly from the MT for two reasons: firstly that there are only two Latin words used to translate 'anger' here, and secondly, because of the ambiguity of the Hebrew conjunction ו, both the translations of *prae* and *ab* are equally viable.

#### 7. Psalm 8.6

Ex	:	minorasti
OL	:	minuisti
RO	:	minuisti
GA	:	minuisti
HE	:	minues (some mss have minuens <sup>52</sup> )
LXX	:	ηλαττωσας
GrkV	:	ελατωσεις
A + Σ:	:	-
MT	:	וַתִּחַסְרֶנִּי

Here again, as in the case of 'de via recta' above, there might be evidence of a revision of the Psalter in the choice of *minorasti*, though the sense is similar. This is still

<sup>52</sup> Psalt. Corbeienne triplex Leningrad GPB., F.v.I, 5 (7<sup>th</sup> century); Psalt. Lugdunense, Lyon, Bibl. De la Ville 425 (387) 1585; Toletanus, Madrid, Bibl. Nac., Vit. 13-1.

however, clearly in the perfect tense, which shows a possible origin in the LXX text, but not the other Greek versions. In comparison with this the HE has the future tense, as the GrkV and the MT. It must not be forgotten, though, that the Hebrew is ambiguous because it is unpointed, and although convention would dictate this to be a clear waw-consecutive form, and thus be translated with the perfect tense, it could be construed as a future in the absence of indicative vowels. The evidence from this example is inconclusive, because there is not enough variation between the OL, RO, and GA to make a distinction. However, we can say that the *Excerpta* version shows indication of having been translated from the forms of the HE, other Greek versions and the Hebrew itself.

#### 8. Psalm 7.14

Ex	:	arsuris operatus est
OL	:	ardentibus operatus est
RO	:	ardentibus effecit
GA	:	ardentibus effecit
HE	:	ad comburendum
LXX (& Peshitta)	:	τοις καιομενοις εξειργασατο
A	:	τοις εμπυριζομενοις εξειργασατο
Σ	:	εις το καιειν
MT	:	חציו לדלקים יפעל

The *Excerpta* text here seems to reflect more the OL than the RO or GA version, due to the words *operatus est*. Both *operatus est* and *effecit* though seem to coincide with the LXX and Aquila's form εξειργασατο. But the *Excerpta*'s text also seems to be a revision, possibly reflecting Aquila's translation, and perhaps based upon the OL. HE looks likely to be based upon Symmachus' translation. Once again the HE is not supported by the MT, which clearly reflects *operatus est* or *effecit* with the verb יפעל, although here again the tense is not the same.

In conclusion then it is certainly not a simple case to assign any one particular version as the direct source of the *Excerpta* text. In examples one to four the *Excerpta* text shows a sure correlation to the Septuagint version, but the other examples are less uniform: five shows resemblance to the RO, six to the GA, seven and eight to the OL. So what kind of conclusions should be drawn from this very contradictory evidence? There is a suggestion that Jerome may have originally started out with the OL text but emended it from the Septuagint before writing the commentary text itself. He is possibly aware of the Hebrew text underlying the Greek and Latin versions as can be seen from several passages in the commentary<sup>53</sup>, yet has not reached the stage of correcting his Latin version wholesale but only in particular cases. Moreover he does not seem to take much account of the Three, as is more the case with the HE version. The *Excerpta* however does seem to represent an intermediate stage in the development of the Latin Psalter text, which does not agree in totality to any one particular version, so far as is known.

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<sup>53</sup> For example, *Comm. In Psalm. III*, (CCL. 72: 184) 'Pro 'sine causa' autem, 'maxilla' legitur in hebraeo, id est LEHI'.

## Interpretational and Exegetical Methodology in the *Excerpta*

Over the last two decades in particular, esteem of Jerome as biblical exegete and interpreter has fluctuated greatly, and two contrasting waves of thought have surfaced. In the trough, Nautin, whose opinion of Jerome is perhaps the most negative, seeing him as almost entirely dependent on his Greek predecessors, in particular Origen<sup>1</sup>. Estin and Gryson<sup>2</sup>, too, have stressed at length the limitations of Jerome's independent work, with particular regard to his use of the Hebrew text. On the crest, Kamesar and Brown<sup>3</sup>, who both appear to be more convinced of Jerome's competence and originality.

Neither side of the altercation seems ready to break however because substantial evidence can be found in Jerome's commentaries accordingly for both arguments. No one can deny Jerome's extensive ballast of previous exegetical writings, both Latin and Greek, but at the same time his most original use of the Hebrew text and systematic exegesis always rise to the surface in any discussion. Jerome himself is fully aware, as has been pointed out in the previous chapter, of the claims made against his works but holds fast to his conviction about the purpose of the biblical commentary: he asserts that the intention of a commentary is to present different interpretations of Scripture, which are difficult to understand, in order that the reader might judge for himself which is the more true.<sup>4</sup> He therefore draws freely upon many diverse sources<sup>5</sup> and adheres to no one school of interpretation exclusively. Jerome was heir to a long tradition of biblical exegetes, inheriting their knowledge either directly from their writings, or indirectly through their influence on subsequent

<sup>1</sup> NAUTIN, P.: *Origène*, I (Paris 1977)

<sup>2</sup> Gryson, R. *Commentaire de Jérôme sur le Prophète Isaïe*, Livres I-IV Freiburg: Herder 1993

<sup>3</sup> KAMESAR: *Jerome, Greek Scholarship and the Hebrew Bible* (Oxford 1993); BROWN, D.: *Vir Trilinguis. A Study in the Biblical Exegesis of Saint Jerome* (Kok Pharos 1992)

<sup>4</sup> Simonetti p.99

writers. Many of these have left their mark on Jerome either in his abundant quotations of their works, or in his interpretational style and technique. And it is this style and technique that allow us to appreciate Jerome's contribution to the *Excerpta*, those characteristics which set it apart from other works, especially those of Origen.

Jerome had studied under representatives of both schools of interpretation. Under Apollinaris of Laodicea he learnt the *Antiochean* method of 'literal' interpretation; and from Didymus he studied the *Alexandrian* method of 'spiritual' interpretation.<sup>6</sup> This diversity in his education never left him or caused inner-conflict but rather each side complemented the other and Jerome developed a critical approach to the two differing methods: he often quotes opposing opinions in fact, usually beginning his exegesis with the literal interpretation, *secundum historiam*, then expounding the spiritual message. In this way Jerome is able to arrive at the 'truth' of the matter by examining several explanations and suggesting to the reader the most probable understanding of the text. The commentary form in which the *Excerpta* are written is clearly Jerome's preferred form of exegesis judging from the predominance of this form in his works, and finds its roots in Philo of Alexandria, whose influence founded the Alexandrian school of spiritual or allegorical interpretation, and who first set out collections of significant verses and section-by-section commentaries on essential textual issues. It is in Philo, too, that we find the origins of Jerome's technique of allegory in interpreting the names of animals, people and places, and their etymological exegesis, a process which had originally been given application by the Stoics in their interpretations of the Greek gods.

Jerome though would have more likely come across this kind of method in the works of Clement, who is keen to exploit the symbolism of numbers and the

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<sup>5</sup> cf. PL25, 820

<sup>6</sup> *Epist.* 84.3

etymologies of Hebrew names<sup>7</sup>. In Clement we can see too the characteristic expression of religious language that Jerome was to adopt, the two levels of interpretation are set out in his treatise on allegory and symbolism<sup>8</sup>, which allow us to move from the lower literal sense to the higher spiritual sense, a process which can even be seen to have become almost mechanical by the time of Jerome's *Excerpta*. But Clement's use of these two levels of interpretations, though inspired, is quite unsystematic. A different case is found in the works of a man, whose name was to be spoken by Jerome in adoration for many years: Origen. For although Origen's work contains interpretational techniques that occur in many previous authors, it was Origen who added order and introduced for the first time precise methodological criteria. As was to be the case later for Jerome, Origen's initial approach was philological, with the aim of ascertaining and fixing the text first, before expounding it. And like Clement Origen finds different levels in the meaning of Scripture, but where Clement adheres to two, Origen sometimes provides three, one literal and two spiritual, the divisions which are examined in his *De Princip.* IV.2:4, and paralleled to the Pauline division of the human person into spirit, soul and body, or to the view of Christians as *simpliciores, progredientes, perfecti*. This latter terminology is the format found most regularly in Jerome's commentaries.<sup>9</sup>

In Eusebius of Caesarea's *Commentary on the Psalms* can be seen further evidence of Jerome's education. Although Eusebius maintains only one level of interpretation in contrast to Origen's two to three, he pays particular attention to the historical background of the Psalms and interprets many as prophecies which find fulfilment

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<sup>7</sup> see Simonetti p.38

<sup>8</sup> *Strom* V.4:20ff

<sup>9</sup> For example in *In Eccl.* I.i.44 (CCL72:251)



only in Christ,<sup>10</sup> in a manner similar to that of Hippolytus of Rome in the early third century, who refers the first and second Psalms to Christ: the first to his birth, the second to his suffering. Eusebius also negates the possibility that certain Psalms relate to either David or Solomon<sup>11</sup>, which is reflected in Jerome's commentary to Psalm 71:

Si super Salomone iste psalmus intellegitur, hoc penitus stare non potest:  
Salomon quippe nec cum sole nec cum luna permansit. Si vero volumus  
intellegere de Xpisto, quaerendum quomodo Xpistus non habeat finem:  
cum sol, et luna, et caelum, et omnia veterescere et transire dicantur.<sup>12</sup>

Although allegorical interpretations are rare in Eusebius they are however occasionally found in connection with the use of the etymology of Hebrew names for example concerning Babylon, Rahab, and Tyre in Psalm 81:4 (1048), which are interpreted to symbolise all pagans.

As we shall see however in contrast to Eusebius, Jerome's exegesis is more diverse and more like that of Origen, incorporating both philological and allegorical aspects. This having been said it is interesting to note that Eustathius of Antioch refuted the interpretations of Origen, accusing him of having allegorised all Scripture, and of having given allegorical readings to passages which ought to have been interpreted solely in a literal manner, and also of having abused the etymologies of Hebrew

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<sup>10</sup> cf. Commentary on Ps. 82 (1072), which prophecies only about Christ; on Ps. 86/87 (1052) on the incarnation of Christ.

<sup>11</sup> For example Pss. 54, 71 (473, 789ff)

<sup>12</sup> CCL 72:216-7

names.<sup>13</sup> These arguments were moreover to be reused in the Origenistic dispute of the era just after the writing of the *Excerpta*.

In the Cappadocians too we see the origin of Jerome's fascination with Hebrew names, and with the literal method. Basil of Caesarea's existing homilies on the Psalms show a predominance of literal interpretation, (only Psalm 44 is understood Christologically, and yet not Psalm 1, as it is in Eusebius and Origen), and recourse to etymologies<sup>14</sup>, which are interpreted allegorically in spite of Basil's position in the Antiochean school.

In Gregory of Nyssa's *On the Titles of the Psalms*, moreover is found the same division of the Book of Psalms as that used by Jerome: 1-40, 41-71, 72-88, 89-105, 106-150.<sup>15</sup> This corresponds exactly to the division explained by Jerome in the commentary to Psalm forty:

Et sciendum primum librum psalterii hic esse finitum: secundum vero esse a quadragesimo primo usque ad septuagesimum primum: tertium a septuagesimo secundo usque in octogesimum octauum: quartum ab octogesimo nono usque in centesimum quintum: quintum a centesimo sexto usque ad finem.<sup>16</sup>

In Theodoret's *Commentary on the Song of Songs* too there is evidence of Origen's interpretation and the same kind of allegory based upon the etymology of Hebrew names as can be seen throughout Jerome's commentaries, for example Bethel being

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<sup>13</sup> PG 18, 656ff

<sup>14</sup> PG 29, 229

<sup>15</sup> PG 44, 433

<sup>16</sup> CCL 71:208

interpreted as the 'house of God'.<sup>17</sup> It is furthermore interesting to note that Theodoret admits openly that his work is the 'fruit of the labour of other exegetes',<sup>18</sup> and frequently quotes other authors without necessarily attributing their name, in the same manner as Jerome.<sup>19</sup>

The same can also be said for Jerome's debt to Didymus the Blind, who was a faithful acolyte of Origen, and whose interpretations also followed a threefold pattern: firstly the deficiency of the literal sense, second the etymology of Hebrew names, and third the symbolism of numbers, although unlike Jerome he was not as interested in the establishment of the original text.

Mention should also be made here of Hilary of Poitiers, whose *Exposition on the Psalms* Jerome knew well and had had transcribed<sup>20</sup>, and who, like Ambrose later, takes Origen as his primary source for allegorical interpretations. Hilary's commentary though shows few conclusions drawn from allegory, but rather a collection of interpretations which together form a "conclusive confirmation of truth otherwise revealed",<sup>21</sup> in marked contrast to Jerome's more critical approach to the different interpretations that he provides almost as standard.

Towards the close of the fourth century but before the *Excerpta* the first treatise on biblical hermeneutics was written by Tyconius, the *Liber Regularum*, which consisted of seven rules regarding allegorical interpretations, which could be applied to discover the hidden truth.<sup>22</sup> Of particular interest here is the sixth rule. The sixth rule, 'de recapitulatione', sets out how Scripture locates in one significant moment a concept which has a much wider time reference: this is evident in Jerome's

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<sup>17</sup> PG 84, 100; cf. Jer. *In Osee* 4.15/16 in which Bethel is expounded as being 'domus Dei'.

<sup>18</sup> PG 81, 48, 1257, 1548

<sup>19</sup> PG 80, 108ff

<sup>20</sup> Jer. *Epist.* 5.2; see Kelly p.48

<sup>21</sup> introduction to *St. Hilary of Poitiers. Selected Works*, Schaff & Wace (eds.) Edinburgh 1997

<sup>22</sup> PL 18, 15.

interpretation in *In Eccl.* I.4 ("Solomon very precisely does not say the earth remains *through the ages*<sup>23</sup> but *through that age*<sup>24</sup>. More precisely we praise the Lord not in one age, but throughout the ages."), that is it is not only valid for that moment, but should be observed at all times.

The few names mentioned above qualify as just some of the many diverse sources that Jerome has drawn upon in his commentaries, both wittingly and unconsciously, for although few names are explicitly mentioned in the *Excerpta*, it must be understood that Jerome's method owes a great deal to the work of these men. Jerome's exegetical technique, like that of Origen, contains many aspects of his predecessors' methods, but here too something has been added to set it apart from the others. Where Origen brought order and precise methodological criteria to the unsystematic interpretations of the Alexandrian Clement, Jerome brings philological rigour and an abundance of sources to the fourth century commentary. The purpose in mentioning so many of the authors above is that they are all at one time or another quoted or mentioned in Jerome's commentaries on the Bible. If this detracts from the originality and coherence of his method, then it is the price he chose to pay for a better understanding of the 'truth' behind the mysteries of the Psalms.

Now that the general methodological background to Jerome's technique has been examined, there remains to review in more detail the specific elements of Jerome's method of exegesis in the *Excerpta*, to limn the types of interpretation, terminology and intent, which shall be treated presently.

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<sup>23</sup> Jer. "in saeculis"

<sup>24</sup> Jer. "in saeculo"

Jerome's *Commentarioli in Psalmos* was written sometime between the years 389 and 392, and most likely is contemporary to the fourteen *Tractatus* on the Psalms and to the *Liber locorum* or Book of Hebrew Names (CCL 72). The position in which this commentary stands in Jerome's works agrees with the fairly early character of the text itself. It precedes the *Quaestiones Hebraicae in Genesim*, which is important when we note whether the text concentrates more on Greek or Hebrew sources, in light of the fact that Jerome's inclination seems to change from the former to the latter in the *Hebrew Questions*. Jerome's method is on the whole that which he himself explains in the Preface to his *Commentary on Ecclesiastes*:

De hebraeo transferens, magis me septuaginta interpretum consuetudini coaptavi, in his dumtaxat, quae non multum ab Hebraicis discrepabant. Interdum Aquilae quoque et Symmachi et Theodotionis recordatus sum, ut nec novitate nimia lectoris studium deterrerem, nec rursum contra conscientiam meam, fonte veritatis omisso, opiniorum rivulos consecrarem<sup>25</sup>

Here Jerome seems to be equally concerned about appearing jejune to his readers as pursuing the truth of the Biblical text. As he states in the preface to the *Excerpta* he is not making a complete study of the Psalter in this commentary but rather focussing on certain passages of interest, which Origen had left out of his *Enchiridion* but were to be found in his other greater works.<sup>26</sup> The work is presented in the form of short notes, sometimes even almost telegraphic, whose content is for the large part philological. This means that the commentary is lacking for many psalms altogether,

<sup>25</sup> CCL 72: 249

<sup>26</sup> CCL 72:177,4-12

and often only explains one verse from a psalm, while in other places it expounds ten or more verses per psalm. It would be erroneous to presuppose that the character of this selection shows anything of Jerome's preference for Scriptural passages, since he has stated quite clearly that the passages are chosen to complement the places where the *Enchiridion* is lacking.

### **The Lemma**

Jerome's normal practice is to begin each section with a verse from the Psalm in question, which as has been shown in the second part of Chapter one, seems to have been translated to accord with whichever reading he prefers from his source texts. The commentary itself gives no information about the sources of the Psalm text, but the lemmata have been shown to originate in various versions including the OL, RO, GA and Greek versions. The possibility that the lemmata in the commentary have been normalised in places against one or more of the other versions in the course of transmission cannot be overlooked, and might go some way to explaining the diversity of apparent sources. In other commentaries, such as the *Commentary on Nahum*,<sup>27</sup> and the *Commentary on Amos* there is a double lemma, consisting of a translation made from the Hebrew and a complete rendition of the Septuagintal text in Latin underneath. This can be seen in several of the commentaries and this technique is used as a rule especially in *In Naum*, *In Ionam*, and *In Amos*. In certain other of the commentaries, for example those on Daniel, Isaiah, Ezechiel, and Jeremiah, the use of the Septuagintal lemma, (in Latin) is not as rigid and is reserved for those passages where it differs substantially from the translation from the Hebrew. In the *Excerpta*

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<sup>27</sup> CCL 76A:530

the lemma is usually quite slight, for the most cases comprising only one verse or more often part of a verse. This stands in comparison with such commentaries as those on the Minor Prophets, (which were probably written in more haste), and in which we can see some lemmata, which cover numerous verses at once, for example *In Ionam* III.6-9. But far from being a martinet to any particular method, Jerome seems to vary his technique in the commentaries, according to which method seems most appropriate to which books.

Jerome divides the Book of Psalms into five books as has been noted in comparison with Gregory of Nyssa's *On the Titles of the Psalms* above, and in full accordance with Hilary of Poitier's identical description, which Jerome must have known<sup>28</sup>, but he does not divide the Commentary accordingly as has been the case with most of his other Scriptural commentaries.

### **Literal Exegesis based upon the Hebrew**

After the Lemma, Jerome usually provides the literal and historical sense of the Hebrew text, which for a large part involves the discussion of difficulties such as the meaning of the Hebrew in comparison with the other versions. He does not, however, compare critically, but in most cases provides an explanation of the differences. Nowhere in the commentary is the Hexapla of Origen mentioned but the detailed use

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<sup>28</sup> *Instructio Psalmorum* 1: Nam aliqui eos Hebraeorum in quinque libros divisos volunt esse, ut sit usque in quadragesimum psalmum liber primus et a quadragesimo usque in septuagesimum primum liber secundus et ex eo usque in octogesimum octauum liber tertius et usque in centesimum quintum



of the versions does seem to presuppose either that he had been working with the Hexapla, (most probably at the library of Caesarea), or that he was drawing on glossed Hexaplaric verses in other works. By this I mean other texts of the Bible, which are annotated with variant readings from Origen's Hexapla. With respect to the Hebrew sources that Jerome's uses, he says little, but does mention Hebrew manuscripts<sup>29</sup>, and Hebrew scrolls<sup>30</sup>. The most common reference is to Symmachus, whose translation Jerome regards as most elegant and often expressing the Hebrew truth, as is the case with the exposition to Psalm 16:

Symmachus has translated this, expressing the Hebrew truth, as 'the sons will be satiated, and they will leave their trace in their children'.<sup>31</sup>

But equally Aquila is mentioned alongside Symmachus, as his very literal translation Jerome accepts to originate in the Hebrew as well: for example in the explanation of Psalm 21, he says, 'And Aquila has translated from the Hebrew'<sup>32</sup>. As well as the Three, reference is also made to the two editions, the Quinta and Sexta, the first of these being mentioned twice more than the second. Reference to the Quinta is made in the exegesis to psalms 21, 115, 124, 126, 134, 138, and 146, and to the Sexta in psalms 21, 88 (twice), 115, and 126. Although this also points towards the use of the Hexapla the frequency and inconsistency of the use of these versions seem to

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liber quartus- ob quod hi omnes psalmi in consummatione sua habeant: *fiat, fiat*- concludatur deinde in centesimum quinquagesimum psalmum liber quintus. (CCL 61)

<sup>29</sup> CCL 72: 193: 'in hebraeis codicibus non habetur'; 185: 'id quod in plurimis codicibus invenitur'; 180, 209, 201, 198: 'in hebraeis voluminibus non habetur'; 240: 'nec in hebraeis voluminibus'; 228: 'secundum hebraea volumina'; 202: 'in hebraeis voluminibus scriptus sit'. See also for comparison *Ep.* 26; *Ep.* 29 for Jerome's use of Hebrew words occurring in Greek and Latin versions as transliterated forms; *Ep.* 36.1 for Jerome's borrowing of Hebrew manuscripts from his local Synagogue; and *Ep.* 20.2 'ex hebraicis codicibus veritas exprimenda est'.

<sup>30</sup> CCL 72: 193: 'in hebraeis voluminibus non habetur'.

<sup>31</sup> CCL 72: 195: Quod Symmachus hebraeam exprimens veritatem transtulit: 'saturabuntur filii, et reliquent residua sua paruulis suis'.

presuppose rather the glossed Hexaplaric text theory, mentioned above. However the reference in the exegesis of Psalm 115 might suggest the contrary:

The fifth and sixth editions place this Psalm together with the previous ones: but Symmachus and the seventy translators have different translations.<sup>33</sup>

In order to know about the structure of the text it seems likely that Jerome had consulted the Quinta and Sexta, rather than just quoting a glossed verse, which would more likely just give a variant reading in the text, as is the case with all the other references to these editions in the commentary. It is in this point in the commentary that Jerome discloses his knowledge of Hebrew most fully, most often just by citing the Hebrew word and then translating it such as in Psalm 88:

Instead of 'pride', in Hebrew is written RAAB, the same letters as written above, which Aquila has translated as 'vehemence', Symmachus as 'presumption', Theodotion as 'pride', and the Sixth edition as 'commotion'.

This is a good example as it shows well Jerome's use of the versions and that he refers to the Hebrew word first, and then compares it with the other versions. This perhaps shows that he recognises the primacy of the Hebrew text and is trying to show how the post-dating versions of the Three, Quinta and Sexta have drawn their translations often, he claims, erroneously, from the Hebrew letters. He explains how this is possible in light of the similarity of the Hebrew letters:

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<sup>32</sup> CCL 72: 199: 'Et Aquila transtulit ex hebraeo'.

On account of the similarity of the Hebrew letters, where the seventy translators have translated 'head', can also be read as 'chief'.<sup>34</sup>

In Hebrew the two *usages* can be confused due to the ambiguity of the consonantal form Resh, Aleph, Shin. Jerome does not specify once again the exact sources of the Hebrew which he is citing, more often than not just saying, 'in Hebrew is written...', but there are various other paraphrasings which are of more interest. Psalm 103 has 'according to the Hebrew manuscripts'<sup>35</sup>; while Psalms 92 and 93 have 'according to the Hebrews'<sup>36</sup>. Having cited these versions Jerome often then opts for one reading of preference, although this is not always the case. This can be seen in the example given above from the commentary to Psalm 88, in which the versions are given yet no one translation is expressly given authority. It is left to the reader to infer or determine the 'correct' reading. The ramifications of this are important when Jerome is seen in the light of controversy, because there are few cases where he can be said to state clearly a preference for one or other version, yet he shows the inappropriateness of some translations by juxtaposing them to the Hebrew tradition. Conversely in those instances where Jerome does opt for a particular version, he does so often boldly, not always substantiating his choice, for example in Psalm 27 he cites Aquila's translation, which we must only presume he prefers, yet does not offer any reason why it is better.

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<sup>33</sup> CCL 72: 234: 'Hunc psalmum quinta et sexta editio cum superioribus copulant: Symmachus vero et Setuaginta interpretes dividunt'.

<sup>34</sup> CCL 72: 232: 'Propter similitudinem hebraearum litterarum, ubi caput Septuaginta transtulerunt, potest et 'princeps' legi'.

<sup>35</sup> CCL 72: 228: 'secundum hebraea volumina'.

<sup>36</sup> CCL 72: 225: 'apud Hebraeos'.

The terminology that Jerome employs in this part of the exegesis is especially helpful in qualifying the type of exegesis that he uses. He makes wide use of the terms *secundum litteram*, *littera sonat*, *historia*, *secundum historiam*, *veritas*, *proprie*. *Secundum litteram* can be explained simply as 'in the literal sense', and the term *littera* itself can mean 'the literal approach' as well as the specific literal meaning of a passage, as is seen in the explanation of Psalm 6:

Where are the followers of the literal interpretation?<sup>37</sup>

*Littera sonat* conveys much the same idea, but means rather 'as the letter reads'. The word '*littera*' has much importance in Jerome's work because as well as referring to the literal interpretation, Jerome actually looks at the letters of words very carefully, especially in respect to Hebrew words in question, where discrepancies are explained in detail. Jerome deals with specific aspects of orthography, both Greek and Hebrew, in the exegesis to Psalms 8, 86, 88, 109, 131, 144. Psalm 8 shows in particular the emphasis that Jerome lends to the study of the very Hebrew letters, which must be understood in order to fully comprehend the Biblical text: this is especially important where there are differing words in different languages, for example for the name of God:

The name of the Lord for the Hebrews has four letters - iod, he, uau, he:

this word is the very name of God, and it can be read as Iaho.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> CCL 72: 188: 'Vbi sunt amici litterae?'

<sup>38</sup> CCL 72: 191: 'Prius nomen Domini apud Hebraeos quattuor litterarum est, iod, he, uau, he: quod proprie Dei vocabulum sonat, et legi potest Iaho'.

This example is very pertinent as it also contains the term *proprie*, which can be understood as 'in the proper sense', a term which aims at discovering the true sense of a word, its *veritas*, especially its true meaning in Hebrew, its *Hebraica veritas*. This is the term probably most frequently associated with Saint Jerome in recent scholarship, and not without reason. Ever the persistent zetetic, Jerome has gained the reputation for his unyielding intent throughout the commentaries to scrutinise the Biblical texts in the pursuit of the truth behind the many versions. The above is also a very good example of Jerome's concise style. Avoiding the temptation to write at great length like many of the other more prolix biblical commentators, Jerome keeps his explanations concise, always focusing on that truth he seeks.

### **Spiritual Exegesis**

After Jerome has given the literal interpretation of a verse or phrase, he then moves on to the spiritual interpretation, which is employed to reveal the inner spiritual sense of the passage. Characteristically Jerome uses terminology such as *anagoge*, *tropologia*, *allegoria*, *etymologia* and *mysteria* to qualify the type of exegesis that he is practising. The technical term *anagōgē*, whose Greek form Jerome almost always keeps when he uses it, literally means 'elevated' or 'superior', and it refers to the 'spiritual' sense of a word or passage of Scripture, more often than not in direct contrast to the literal sense, which has just been expounded. Jerome's understanding and employment of this term may have developed over time, some argue<sup>39</sup>, for in some places it seems almost identical in usage to 'tropologia', yet in his last work, the *Commentary on Jeremiah*, it is used almost exclusively in reference to the moral and allegorical

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<sup>39</sup> See Jay. *L'exégèse de Saint Jérôme*, 226-232

exegesis of Scripture. However it must be noted that there is considerable overlap in the terminology of this class of exegesis and it is often difficult to form the boundaries of certain terms. This confusion is not only a modern difficulty, as Jerome himself points out that he has combined these methods to a certain degree: in the prologue to the first Book of his Commentary on Zechariah, he says

historiae Hebraeorum tropologiam nostrorum miscui<sup>40</sup>

Jerome often uses *tropologia* to establish a link between the Old and New Testaments, by which means he hopes to secure Christ's place in the history of salvation: this is evident from the commentary to Psalm nine, in which he states:

The whole Psalm therefore pertains to the <sup>MYSTERY</sup> of Christ through tropology.<sup>41</sup>

These three terms, *anagoge*, *tropologia*, and *allegoria*, Jerome sometimes uses to extrapolate the relevance of the Biblical text to his own age, or to his particular Christian beliefs. In the explanation to Psalm 103 he comments on the verse which includes the phrase, 'you made the darkness, and it is night', by saying,

It could however be seen according to *anagoge* as relating to the night of this present age: for when a man has been surrounded by wickedness, the beasts, that is wicked powers attack him, and seek food for themselves;

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<sup>40</sup> CCL 76A: 748

<sup>41</sup> CCL 72: 191: 'totus igitur psalmus per tropologiam ad Xpisti pertinet sacramentum'.

but when through conversion and repentance the true light has begun to rise up in his body, then the beasts will recede, and return to their lairs.<sup>42</sup>

Following in the tradition of many of the exegetical authors mentioned earlier in this chapter, Jerome also employs etymologies in this part of the exegesis, taken chiefly from the Book of Hebrew Names. Drawing on the long tradition of the *Onomastica* Jerome likes to explain the meaning of a name, and thereby introduce the reader to a greater understanding of that name's importance within the Scripture. An example of this would be the name Nabal from 1 Samuel 25, about which he says,

Instead of the word 'insipiens', the Hebrew has NABAL. This is what Abigail says about her husband Nabal on Mount Carmel: 'in truth, according to his name, he is a fool'.<sup>43</sup>

Although he does not pick up on many Hebrew names in this particular commentary, it is not uncharacteristic of Jerome to base interpretation on the meaning of a name, as is the case with the *Commentary on Jonah*:

If indeed Jonah is to be translated as 'dove', and if the dove can be seen as the Holy Spirit, then we can also interpret the Dove as signifying the dove's entrance into us.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> CCL 72: 228: 'potest autem et iuxta anagogen de saeculi huius nocte cantari: quod cum aliquis fuerit errore circumdatus, statim bestiae, id est, adversariae potestates in eum desaeviant, et quaerant escam sibi; cum vero per conversionem et paenitentiam coeperit in corpore eius verum lumen oboriri, tunc recedant bestiae, et ad sua cubilia revertantur'.

<sup>43</sup> CCL 72: 193: 'Pro eo quod est 'insipens', in hebraeo NABAL positum est. Vnde et Abigail de viro suo Nabal ait in monte Carmelo: vere secundum nomen suum insipiens est'.



Typically Jerome's spiritual exegesis, more so than the literal interpretation, refers to matters of the Church, New Testament, and Christology, and often has strong moral exhortation to orthodox Christian readers and vituperations against heretics.

Underlying these more specific and technical terms there is another term that Jerome employs frequently which perhaps ought to be examined briefly. The conjunction *unde* is used numerous times by Jerome in the Latin text, and can be translated variously as 'therefore', 'thus', 'for this reason', 'and so', amongst others. The importance of this term lies in its expression of Jerome's technique as 'expositor'. Although the term 'commentary' is used more frequently today, the Latin term often used in its place, 'expositio', is perhaps more illustrative of the intent of the author. The word signifies a connection, a linking of one idea to another. Cahill in particular sees this as a way in which the mediaeval commentator can attempt to depict and explain the overall divine plan or logic at work in the Holy Scriptures.<sup>45</sup> This is particularly relevant where Jerome links the New Testament by citations with the Old Testament in order to establish a link between Christ and the overall history of salvation. This can be seen in an example where another word of similar usage has been employed to the same end, *ergo*, in the commentary to Psalm 39:

This has a spiritual meaning therefore, that is, true madness, about which the apostle says: 'if we are out of our mind, it is for the sake of God'.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> CCL 76 (1969)

<sup>45</sup> Cahill, *A First Commentary on Mark*, (OUP 1998)

<sup>46</sup> CCL 72: 207: 'Est ergo spiritalis, id est, vera amentia, de qua et apostolus loquebatur: 'sive mente excedimus, Deo'.

Now that the individual elements have been examined it seems condign and advantageous to look at a particular verse which exhibits some of these facets, in order to see how Jerome knits them together.

## IX

**In the end to the secrets of the son.** Although Aquila has translated 'youth of the son' instead of 'secrets of the son', it must be known that the Hebrew reads 'concerning the death of the son'. Then Symmachus has translated it in this way: 'concerning the victory from the death of the son'. The whole Psalm therefore pertains to the <sup>MYSTERY</sup> of Christ through tropology. The Seventy translators therefore wanted to hide the suffering and resurrection of Christ, which was previously unknown to the world, by the word 'secrets', so that it might not be understood easily by the readers of that age.<sup>47</sup>

Jerome starts off by citing the lemma, which he has translated from the Septuagint, before immediately launching into the literal interpretation: he begins by giving alternate readings from Aquila, then his reading of the Hebrew, then on to Symmachus. Next he moves swiftly to deduce (*igitur*) the spiritual meaning pertaining to Christ, and his method of arriving at this conclusion, (*per tropologiam*). He then goes on to explain why there is a different reading in the Hebrew to the Greek version, which he has translated, by linking (*unde*) the Hebrew and Greek aspects together. What has happened here is that Symmachus has translated למנצח as 'the victory'. The phrase, 'secrets of', comes from the root עלם, meaning 'to conceal'.

<sup>47</sup> CCL 72: 191: '*In finem pro absconditis filii*. Licet Aquila pro absconditis filii 'adulescentiam filii' posuerit, tamen sciendum in hebraeo haberi 'pro \* filii'. Denique et Symmachus in hunc modum + "MORTE" transtulit: 'Pro victoria de morte filii'. Totus igitur psalmus per tropologiam ad Xpisti pertinet

The word עלמות, in the plural then is 'secrets', but has been translated as if it were על-מות, 'concerning the death of...', which Jerome says is the form found in his Hebrew text. Aquila's term, 'youth', also seems to come from עלם or עלמות, meaning 'young man/woman', a form that also occurs in Thes. 46, 48.15. So although a knowledge of Hebrew is strictly necessary to understand Jerome's logic here, he has set out all the different translations and opted for the Hebrew. Only then, having established the original text, can he proceed to explain the meaning of the words. In this way Jerome achieves a wonderful concinnity by progressing through the various aspects of his method one by one, in a logical order. In doing so moreover he evinces not only the manifold readings of the text, but also their inter-relationship and the reason for the textual variation in the first place.

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sacramentum. Vnde et Septuaginta interpretes Xpisti passionem et resurrectionem, quae ignota prius mundo fuit, per verbum absconsionis celare voluerunt, ne a gentibus illo tempore facile nosceretur.'

## Jerome's ability in and use of Hebrew

The question of Saint Jerome's competence in Hebrew has been a much debated subject in recent scholarship. There is a tendency, though, in some works to gauge the relative level of his ability by examining certain of his Hebrew transliterations with respect to the established readings from the Masoretic Text, or by comparing his knowledge, with that of his contemporaries.<sup>1</sup> The need to qualify the extent of Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew is absolute if one desires to know Jerome's personal contribution to a text such as the *Excerpta*, for if the Hebrew learning in the *Excerpta* is in keeping with the other commentaries then it is less likely that the work is merely a compendium or translation from Origen. For although Origen is thought to have studied Hebrew, albeit as Jerome points out '*contra gentis suae naturam*'<sup>2</sup> (as a Greek), his knowledge was in all probability scant in comparison with that which Jerome was to develop. The situation is made more complex on account of the absence of the particular Hebrew texts that Jerome used as his sources.<sup>3</sup> We do not know therefore the exact corresponding Hebrew by which to gauge the accuracy of Jerome's readings, and are forced to conjecture and reconstruct the original Hebrew underlying the Latin evidence from the vocalisation of the MT and Manuscript versions presently available.

There has been a tendency in previous studies, notably the most recent by Dennis Brown<sup>4</sup> and Adam Kamesar<sup>5</sup> to seek evidence of Jerome's Hebrew knowledge in his etymological works, in particular the *Liber Interpretationis Hebraicorum Nominum*, the Book of Hebrew Names, a translation of a list attributed by Jerome originally to

<sup>1</sup> e.g. Burstein, *La compétence en hébreu de Saint Jérôme*.

<sup>2</sup> *De vir.* III. 54.

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 29 in chapter 'Interpretational and Exegetical Methodology in the *Excerpta*' for a list of references to Hebrew sources in the *Excerpta*.

<sup>4</sup> *Vir Trilinguis*, pp.71-82

Philo of Alexandria<sup>6</sup>, and to take a number of examples from this, assessing their exactness and accuracy in the light of modern learning. Brown concentrates upon instances where Jerome's explanations are "fantastically incorrect", in order to discover the reason for his mistakes, and thereby assess his Hebrew knowledge, but himself asserts that this is inadequate. There seems to me to be two significant flaws in this method, the first being admitted by Brown himself:

Very many of Jerome's explanations are correct, but a sizeable minority of these meanings are taken from the Bible itself, and so these are no real guide to the extent or quality of Jerome's Hebrew knowledge.<sup>7</sup>

And the second being that there is no way of knowing if this is actually Jerome's personal knowledge of the Hebrew language or merely a transcription of an etymological tradition already very widely accepted and distributed in Jerome's time in the *Onomastica*, as has been shown in the previous chapter on Jerome's exegetical background. He may have merely used reference works, suggests Burstein, such as Greek dictionaries of Hebrew words written in Greek characters, (or the second column of Origen's Hexapla<sup>8</sup>), which would account for the variation in transliterations where Greek cannot represent certain of the Hebrew letters.<sup>9</sup> There

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<sup>5</sup> The *Liber nominum*, in *Jerome, Greek Scholarship, and the Hebrew Bible*, 103-126.

<sup>6</sup> See *Nom. Hebr. Prol.*

<sup>7</sup> Brown, p.75

<sup>8</sup> Nautin sees reason to doubt the existence of the first column of Origen's Hexapla, from the fact that only transliterations of Hebrew words appear in the surviving fragments, which admittedly could be due to the incompetence of scribes unfamiliar with the Hebrew script, but this could explain why Jerome only uses transliterations and vocalised Hebrew words in his commentaries, which could be second column matter. Moreover in his later years Jerome was entirely dependant on scribes for dictation due to the failing of his eyesight. In this situation it seems unlikely that he had a scribe who could write Hebrew, hence the necessity for transliterations.

<sup>9</sup> Burstein p.35, 66-67.

seems to be great evidence in favour of the etymological tradition,<sup>10</sup> although the very fact of the matter is that it is hard to know one way or the other whose knowledge is attested in Jerome in light of the obscurity in which the texts were created. Estin explains the difficulty of the subject in this way:

D'une part, il nous est souvent impossible de discerner, parmi les remarques grammaticales de Jérôme, celles qui sont de première, de deuxième ou de troisième main, c'est-à-dire celles qu'il aurait faites personnellement sur l'hébreu, celles dont le contenu lui aurait été enseigné par tel ou tel maître hébreu, celles qu'il aurait puisées chez des commentateurs grecs.<sup>11</sup>

It is this inability to attribute a definite Hebrew knowledge to Jerome which has spawned an opposition that likes to see Jerome as more a transmitter of knowledge, than a source of independent knowledge of the Hebrew language. Burstein<sup>12</sup> moreover has taken the argument a step further in suggesting that Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew was *passive*, in that he is able to identify forms, yet is incapable of explaining them correctly: Estin (paraphrasing Burstein) remarks:

Dans ses commentaires il mélange les formes du substantif à l'état absolu et à l'état construit.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> cf. F. Wütz, *Onomastica Sacra* (TU 41, 1914) showing Jerome's etymological lists can be traced back to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, perhaps earlier.; and De Lagarde, *Onomastica Graeca minora*, in *Onomastica Sacra*, Göttingen 1887.

<sup>11</sup> Estin, p.38

<sup>12</sup> *La compétence en hébreu de Saint Jérôme*, pp. 73-100.

<sup>13</sup> Estin p.39, >Burstein pp.98-100

and even

Il est certain que Jérôme ignorait la signification de certains mots hébraïques, et même de mots-outils comme la conjonction 'wlm, et confondait des homonymes.<sup>14</sup>

This *passive* knowledge might also be indicated in some of Jerome's Epistles, although admittedly, evidence from this source might be used for *both* arguments. For Jerome describes his advocations for the learning of Hebrew by heart, for example in *Epist.* 128.3 in connection with the rote learning of the Psalms, and in *Epist.* 39.1, in which he promotes again the ability to read and sing the Psalter in Hebrew. Let it be known that there is no mention in these passages of a need to understand the Hebrew, merely of being able to pronounce it.

The case against Jerome in this controversy is strong, the case for, surprisingly weak. In defence of Jerome Brown is positive, if curt, avowing that "he had a good command of written Hebrew".<sup>15</sup> Brown's argument, though, as I have said is based for the most part on the evidence taken from the *Liber Interpretationis Hebraicorum Nominum*, which seems to me to by-pass the largest source of possible knowledge about Jerome's Hebrew learning: the Hebrew Scriptural references from his Biblical commentaries.

The only scholars to my knowledge, who seem to have indicated this path are Kutscher<sup>16</sup>, Brønno<sup>17</sup>, and especially Sperber<sup>18</sup>, and though Kutscher's study is

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<sup>14</sup> Burstein p.73, 81-82

<sup>15</sup> Brown p.86

<sup>16</sup> Kutscher, p.145

<sup>17</sup> Brønno, *Die Aussprache der hebräischen Laryngale nach Zeugnissen des Hieronymus* (Copenhagen 1970)

<sup>18</sup> Sperber, A.: *Hebrew from Greek and Latin Transliterations*, (Cincinnati 1937-8)



restricted to only a couple of paragraphs, he nevertheless understands the importance of the evidence from the commentaries:

Thanks to the several hundred H[ebrew] words that appear in his commentaries, we are able to form an idea of H as he knew it...the writings of Jerome are still a gold mine of information and a more thorough study of his works might well yield many more items as surprising as these.<sup>19</sup>

Sperber's account of the transliterations is perhaps the closest to this study, in that the aim is to provide a survey of Jerome's grammar from the Hebrew transliterations. He also makes great use of the transliterations from the proper names transliterated in the *Septuagint*, and the material from the second column of Origen's Hexapla. However, though the material has been categorised methodically and arranged well, discussion of the various forms found is limited to some general points.<sup>20</sup>

It was Kutscher's lines (above) that first spurred me to investigate the Hebrew transliterations in the Biblical commentaries. Inspired and directed by his suggestion I have collated and made a study of the Hebrew words that Jerome explains or mentions in the commentaries, and tabulated them in a list which is to be found appended. The table lists the Hebrew word as it is presented in the CCL edition of the commentaries, together with its location, Jerome's Latin translation, an English translation of Jerome's Latin, and of the MT (if used), the MT consonantal text, and a transliteration of the MT. The two columns of MT have been included for a number of reasons: firstly the consonantal text has been retained so that in places where Jerome's reading is

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<sup>19</sup> ~~Bronno, Ibid.~~ KUTSCHER, *IBID.*

<sup>20</sup> Sperber, p.135-138

confusing or erroneous, the variant reading is sometimes very apparent and comprehensible when faced with a vowel-less Hebrew text. The transliteration will show differences between Jerome's vowel pattern and that of the accepted Masoretic vocalisation. Some of the findings of this study are presented below, arranged according to the insight that they provide into Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew orthography, grammar, and vocabulary. The Hebrew vocabulary that Jerome uses in his commentaries will be examined with regard to his appreciation of these grammatical points: **Those relating to orthography:** *a) silent and vocal sheva; b) the distinction between He and Het; c) the recognition of 'aleph and 'ayin; d) dagesh/doubling of consonants; e) the distinction of sin, shin, sade;* **Those relating to grammar:** *f) vowel changes; g) segolate nouns; h) the perfect and imperfect forms; i) the Niphal form; j) the Hithpoel form; k) the furtive patah; l) the construct plural form; m) pronominal suffix forms.*

#### **A note on the use of the MT forms in comparison.**

*For a better understanding of the transliterations of Jerome, I had originally just cited the Hebrew consonantal form of the words, to which the transliteration refers. Given that Jerome's transliterations antedate the activities of the Masoretic school of Tiberias, it would be clearly wrong to deem Jerome's transliterations either 'correct' or 'incorrect', with respect to these forms. An attempt has been made, therefore, to look at Jerome's transliterations as representative of his pronunciation of Hebrew, or rather that of his Hebrew tutor, and to see unexpected forms not as 'incorrect', but as variations from the later Tiberian pronunciation. Other possibilities have been examined in appropriate places such as the grafting of Mishnaic Hebrew forms on*

*Biblical Hebrew, and possible dialectal differences, such as Syriac, Aramaic, or Arabic influence.*

***a) Silent and vocal sheva***

In these examples taken from the works of Jerome there are a number of different representations of shevas, (mainly *vocal shevas*). By examining these examples I would like to question whether there is any evidence to suggest that Jerome understood the quality of semi-vowels, and whether he was trying to represent them. There may also be other explanations which could explain the diversity of transliterations.

**Vocal sheva written with 'A'**

In the majority of cases where the word that Jerome is trying to represent contains a vocal sheva, he has represented this with the letter 'A'. This could be for a number of reasons. It is possible that just as in noun patterns with the prefix [m-] that keep the original vowel quality of [a], such as mabsar (=mib̄sar), meaning 'fortress', there is grafting of the Aramaic and Mishnaic Hebrew forms onto Biblical Hebrew, (see also **vowel/letter changes**). Alternatively this could just represent the way in which Jerome perceived and represented the particular pronunciation of his Hebrew tutors. Jerome of course we must remember was working from unvocalised texts and it is very possible that the concept of semi-vowels was quite foreign to his Latin mind. This is a very real possibility, especially when we consider that there was no representation of these sounds in the Latin alphabet. Even if Jerome was trying to

show these sounds, it would be difficult to prove because there is no distinction between a qames and a hatep qames hatup for example, which would both be written with an 'A'.

#### SAPHARAD

ספרד	s <sup>3</sup> pārad	=? Sardis/ Sepharad
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Brown-Driver-Briggs notes the form **Σαφαραδ** here, (from the manuscript Q<sup>a</sup>), possibly meaning 'Sparda', a town in Asia Minor, although no definite connection has yet been established between the name and the location. The word is only found in Obadiah 1:20, and is translated in the KJV as 'Sepharad'. Regardless of the dubiety of the geography, this word form preserves in Greek the 'a' vowel of Jerome's transliteration. This is also to be found in the other geographical possibilities, such as the SW Median 'Šaparda', and 'Saparda' from NE Nineveh.<sup>21</sup>

#### GAON

גאון	g <sup>3</sup> 'ōn	exaltation
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Jerome's transliteration here seems to represent the absolute form of the substantive, gā'ōn, rather than the construct form, which is found in the MT.

#### IADABBER /NABALA

נבל ובלה ידבר	nābāl n <sup>3</sup> bālāh y <sup>3</sup> dabber
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<sup>21</sup> See Brown-Driver-Briggs for further manuscript details.

**This also applies for:**

MABUCHA, SABABIM, BASARI, DABARACH, NAOTH, PHALETA, SARIDIM, SABAIM,  
NADABOTH, CHASIL, MAATH, CALABIN, SABAOOTH, RAFAIM, SAARIM, SALAMIN, RAU,  
BAGGOIM, MASPFA, BARURA, MAPHATE, METHNOSASOTH, HEDALU, NASAMA,  
CHANESER, BASAION, NASAMOTH, ARMANOTH, BASSOD.

### **Vocal sheva written with 'E'**

In these cases Jerome has represented the sheva with the letter 'E'. In the first example here I am inclined to wonder if Jerome's representation is a reflection of the original vowel sounds of the word p<sup>3</sup>ri. In Jer. 12.18 we find [peri] with a segol, and where the word takes suffixes for example in Ho. 14.9 and Ez. 36.8 the form is also found with a segol. There is good reason to believe therefore that because Jerome has not represented the sheva with the letter 'A', which is more common in his writings, he is thinking of the original full vowel segol, which he represents with the letter 'E'.

PHERI (initial vocal sheva)

פרי	p <sup>3</sup> rī
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NESICHE ADAM

נסיכי אדם	n <sup>3</sup> sikey 'ādām
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The same can possibly be argued for this word NESICHE, which is found in the singular as **nesek**, meaning 'a drink offering'.

# ALLELUIA

הללו יה	hal³lū yāh
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The sheva here is between two of the same consonant, and is vocal, which might explain why it has been represented, rather than being omitted as is sometimes the case. However, the question of why it has been represented with the letter 'E' is again difficult. The semi-vowel is passed over very quickly and it strikes me that to represent it with an 'A' produces a rather harsh sounding word, which is harder to say. The choice of 'E' would seem to be closer to the presumed pronunciation of the Hebrew word, (especially to the **imperative singular** form *halēl*) as heard by Jerome, and therefore does not necessarily support the argument that Jerome was conscious of representing different semi-vowels with different Latin characters.

**This also applies for:**

LETHECH SEORIM, BEOR, NOCEDIM, THERUA, BERITH, THERAFIM, NECHOTA, GEDUD, AIALA SELUA, MEGELLA, ONENA, MENNI, GEBIRA, NEBEIM

The sheva has been represented variously with the letters U, I, and O. I believe in these cases the diversity of representation can be attributed to variations in pronunciation, or Jerome's uncertainty of the actual vowel-sound in the word, due to his use of an unvocalised text.

**Vocal sheva written with 'U'**

## SUGULLA

סגולתו	s³gullātō	'his property' (Ps. 135:4)
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## ACCHUMARIM

הכמרים	hak <sup>3</sup> mārīm
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This word, which means 'idol-priests', is to be found in II Kings 23:5, and is the definite plural form of the substantive **kōmer**. Jerome's transliteration preserves the šūreq/qibbūš pronunciation, which might be reflected in the Late Hebrew word **kūmār**, and Aramaic כומר, (**kūmrā**'). It is possible that Jerome's transliteration might preserve an older form or a variant pronunciation of this word from the one brought down to us by the Masoretes.

## Vocal sheva written with 'T'

### IGAR

יגר	y <sup>3</sup> gar
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### IOR

יאר	y <sup>3</sup> 'ōr
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## Vocal sheva written with 'O'

### CHORETHIM

גוי כרתים	gōy k <sup>3</sup> rēṭīm
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The word k<sup>3</sup>reṭīm (=Kerethites, a name for the Philistines or perhaps Cretans) is found in Ez 25.16 with this particular orthography, written with the sheva, which shows little correspondence to the 'O' vowel in Jerome's transliteration. However, if we look



at the LXX versions, we find that the LXX (Vatican) manuscript has  $\chi\omicron\lambda\theta\epsilon\iota$ , the LXX B has  $\chi\omicron\pi\pi\tau$ , which might explain the origin of the 'O' vowel.<sup>22</sup> It is also curious to wonder if this vocalisation is represented in Origen's transliteration in the missing second column of the Hexapla, which could also be another possible source for this reading. To our misfortune the readings of Symmachus, Theodotion and Aquila have not been preserved for comparison.

#### SINTHOROTH

צנתרות	ṣant <sup>3</sup> rōt
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In light of the relative rarity of this word, (it is only found once in the Hebrew Bible, in Zech. 4:12), it is interesting to note that Jerome's transliteration shows some similarity to the more common צנור (*ṣinnor*), which also means 'pipe', 'sprout', or 'conduit'. This word is also found in Psalm 42.8 and II Sam. 5.8. It is conceivable that Jerome was thinking of the vocalisation of this word when he transliterated SINTHOROTH.

#### Vocal sheva NOT written

##### BRESITH

בראשית	b <sup>3</sup> rē'sīt
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##### BUSIM

<sup>22</sup> Examples taken from critical apparatus of RAHLFS, A.: *Septuaginta* vol.II (Württembergische

באשים	b <sup>3</sup> 'ušim	Stinking or worthless things/ wild grapes; cf. Vulg. 'labruscae'.
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**This also applies for:**

SGOLLA, PHTHIGIL, SAR, MOPHETH, SIRIM, MRIM

***b) The distinction between He and Het***

The extensive work of Brønno on the subject of the representation of the gutturals in Jerome does much for classifying the different ways in which Jerome transliterates the Hebrew sounds.<sup>23</sup> The quintessential problem that faced Jerome in this process of transliteration was that Hebrew contains certain sounds that are not found in the Latin or Greek alphabets, which, he often claims, were unspeakable for most non-Jews. The mispronunciation of Hebrew gutturals by Latin speakers, he adds, is something of an amusement to the Jews:

The Jews are proud of their knowledge of the Law and parade the fact that they can repeat correctly by heart all the biblical names. As, however, these are foreign to us and we do not know their etymology, we pronounce them incorrectly. When we happen to make a mistake in the accent and lengthen a short syllable or shorten a long one, they laugh at our ignorance especially if the mistake is in an aspirate or a guttural. If we do not pronounce these peculiar surnames and the language generally

- which is barbarous to us - in exactly the same way as the Jews do, they break out into loud laughter and swear that they cannot understand what we say.<sup>24</sup>

In this section the letters He and Het have been treated together, because there is often an overlap in the transliteration of these two similar Hebrew letters. The Greek authors of the Septuagint of the third-second centuries B.C.E. solved the problem of the Hebrew gutturals by substituting certain Greek letters for the Hebrew gutturals: 'ayin for example was represented by a *gamma*, *Het* by *chi*. This was not always the case, the name יִשְׂחָק (yishaq) for example is transliterated for the most part as Isaak, but for many cases *chi* was used, and therefore transcribed into Latin characters as *ch*, as in the names רָחֵל (rahel)=Rachel, and אַחִיעֶזֶר ('ahiy'ezer)=Achiezer. Similarly 'ayin was sometimes not transliterated, as in the name Iakob=יַעֲקֹב, but often represented by *gamma*, and transliterated by *g*: עֹזָה=Gaza. As Sutcliffe points out, this is often done on account of the words' familiarity already in the Greek form.<sup>25</sup> Although this system was probably known by Jerome as it may have existed in the Septuagint and Hexapla versions he was using, there seems to be little trace at all of its use in Jerome's own works. There are no cases of this kind of transliteration in the commentaries studied here. In a large number of cases there is no transliteration of the gutturals *He*, *Het*, 'ayin, and 'alef at all, which could be because Jerome considered these sounds *breathings* and not letters: he actually avows that "H a plerisque aspiratio putatur esse,

<sup>23</sup> BRØNNØ, E.: Die Aussprache der hebräischen Laryngale nach Zeugnissen des Hieronymus (AARHUS 1970)

<sup>24</sup> *Comm. Titum* 3, 9 (PL 26, 630): Proprie pulsant Iudaeos, qui in eo se iactant et putant legis habere notitiam, is nomina teneant singulorum: quae quia barbara sunt, et etymologias eorum non novimus, plerumque corrupte proferuntur a nobis. Et is forte erraverimus in accentu, in extensione et brevitate syllabe, vel brevia producentes, vel producta breviantes, solent irridere nos imperitiae, maxime in aspirationibus in quibusdam cum rasura gulae litteris preoferendis...Is igitur a nobis haec nominum et linguae idiomata, ut videlicet barbara, non ita fuerint expressa, ut exprimuntur ab Hebraeis, solent cachinnum attolere, et iurare se penitus nescire quod dicimus.

non littera"<sup>26</sup>, and he explains his usage again regarding this letter in the following way:

ut I litterae servemus ordinem, aspirationem H in plerisque omisimus;  
licet eam Grammatici non putent litterae loco habendam.<sup>27</sup>

Jerome comments that sometimes according to Hebrew usage the letter *He* is written but an *a* is pronounced, which seems to show that the aspirate was sometimes omitted in pronunciation.<sup>28</sup> This comment refers in particular to the *he* found at the end of feminine words, and preceded by a *qames*, such as קדושה. This explains why Jerome discards the letters *He* and *Het* in some representations, but it does not explain why there appear several instances of the letter H in the transliterations in the commentaries. This is possibly due to his inconsistent technique of transliteration.<sup>29</sup> Now we must remember the possibility that the texts we are dealing with could have been altered in transmission, but at the same time it appears unlikely that all occurrences of this kind could have been normalised by a Hebrew-speaking scribe after Jerome. The source documents, the commentaries, are varied and numerous. Moreover, if this were the case then there should be more of a consistency in the 'corrections', but as we shall see, the transliteration methods are quite inconsistent.

Here are two words, in which a *He* has been omitted, followed by a list of other such words. It will be noted that in many of these cases the omitted *He* is a final letter, preceded by an 'a' vowel, and therefore is not really represented in the pronunciation, but remains nonetheless an unspoken consonant in Hebrew. It is interesting to note

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<sup>25</sup> Sutcliffe, *St. Jerome's pronunciation of Hebrew*, p.116.

<sup>26</sup> Lib. Nom. Heb. (PL 23,799)

<sup>27</sup> Ibid. (23, 841)

<sup>28</sup> See Paul Kahle in *ZATW* 39 (1921) 235.

then that although Jerome considered the Hebrew language to be the original tongue, he did not think of it as sacred and untouchable, or he would surely have attempted to keep every consonant in transliteration.

#### HARA LACH

חרה-לך	ḥārāh lāk	'you burned with anger'
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#### PHALETA

פליטה	p <sup>3</sup> lēyṭāh	'escape'
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The word PHALETA is found in Genesis 32:9 with the meaning 'escape'. The vocalisation that Jerome gives the word, however, resembles more that of the word *pālēyṭ*, or *pālīyṭ*, which have the meaning 'fugitive'.

**This also applies for:**

BECHCHORA, MABUCHA, PHOTA, EEZINU, THERUA, THODA, ARIM, ABAL ABALIM, MOLAL, AAGAB, ABIONA, ELOIM, OSIANNA, ALLELUIA, ROOBOTH, SEDUTHA, GABAA, ADAGIM, ABDIL, ASIDA, ADRACH, AZIZIM, AGGOI, AL IUDA, AADAM, AGGA, OIIM, AMSUCHAN, MOTA, LABALA, IETHMAU, CANE, REEB, BASUPHA, ALLUOTH, HEIEU, ACCHUMARIM, ISAAR, BEEN

Similarly, but of a smaller number, are those words, in which *Het* has been left out of the transliteration, and this tends to be shown regarding words, in which the *Het* occurs in the middle of a word:

<sup>29</sup> See also Sperber, p.111, for examples of Jerome's representation of *He* and *Heth*.

RAAB

רחב	rāḥab	'wide/broad'
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NAAMATHI

ולא נחמתי	v <sup>3</sup> l'ō niḥāmtī	'but I did not comfort'
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It is interesting to note here other words from the same root, נחם, which have a predominance of the vowel 'a' in their vocalisation: **naḥam** (n.pr.m. 'comfort', I Chr. 4:19), **naḥūm** (n.pr.m. 'Nahum'), or **naḥāmānī** (n.pr.m. 'compassionate', Neh. 7:7), and similarly the Arabic verb نَعِم, which is vocalised as **naḥama**.

**This also applies for:**

NESAB, ALECHCHA, ARASTHEM, ESEBON, GEMELA, SEMA, MALCAIM, ARSOTH, SELUA, ALLUOTH, HEIEU, IAID

In contrast, though, there do seem to be a number of examples of words, in which the Hebrew *Het* has been represented by the letter H. This alone does not provide evidence of a complete understanding of the Hebrew letters, as the usage is not consistent through the commentaries. All the same, this practice is not in keeping with the Greek method, mentioned above, which would supply a *ch* for the corresponding *Het*. There do not appear to be any occurrence of the letter H being used to transliterate a *He*. This could provide evidence, though it is scant, that the author of these words was trying to show an understanding of the presence of this letter, or perhaps a need to try to represent its pronunciation in Latin letters. Here are

the ten other examples of words containing the letter *Het*, which has been transliterated by Latin H:

#### HATATH

חטאת	ḥaṭā't	'sin' (construct)
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#### SOHEL

שחל	šaḥal	'lion' (poetical)
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The word SOHEL is vocalised by Jerome as if it were the present participle of the verb from root שחל, meaning 'calling' or 'proclaiming'.

#### HARUS

חרץ	ḥārūṣ
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This word is the passive participle of חרץ, with the meaning 'cut' or 'sharpened', and is found in Is. 10:22 and Lev. 22:22. Although the Het is a root letter, we would expect Jerome to have written ARUS, according to his more frequent transliteration technique of disregarding *Het* and *He*.

**This also applies for:**

HAREB, BARIHIM, MEREHM, MARAHAEFETH, HAMMA, HARSITH, HOD

The letter H has been used as well to represent both '*ayin*' and '*alef*'. Once again this usage is not at all consistent and only occurs a couple of times throughout the whole commentaries. The particular usage, however, does appear to be an answer to an exegetical problem. By this I mean that in the following example taken from *In*



*Ieremiam* I.48 Jerome is trying to distinguish the two words רעים and ראים, which is difficult when one does not generally represent the distinguishing letter in Latin transliterations.

REHIM

רעים	rē'im	'friends'
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ROHIM

ראים	rō'im	'shepherds'
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The problem is not completely solved because the author substitutes both *'ayin* and *'alef* with H, but at least there is written recognition of their presence in the Hebrew text. There is greater recognition of the Hebrew form in the explanation that the author gives as well, where the word is spelled out to clarify the difficult problem to the reader: for example REHIM is translated as AMATORES and clarified as consisting of the letters RES, AIN, IOTH, MEM.

Again in the case of איש the author's transliteration is inconclusive because in one place he uses the letter H, and in another he does not:

איש	'īš	'man'
אשה	'iššāh	'woman'

The forms HIS/HISSA are found in HQIG 2.23 and contrastingly IS/ISSA in In Osee 1.16/17.

So the evidence seems to be somewhat contradictory, and erratic, but I believe that some things can still be learnt from this data. The author does seem capable of

spelling out Hebrew words, recognising the Hebrew letters, and making this clear to the reader in cases of difficulty or ambiguity such as the REHIM/ROHIM case. Also in the HIS/HISSA example we can see evidence that the author has tried to represent a previously unwritten aspirate with the letter H. The author does not accord to Greek convention as seen in the Septuagint and (probably) second column of the Hexapla, but either omits to represent *He* and *het* or represents *het* with H, perhaps when there is also difficulty or ambiguity involved. The inconsistencies of the examples do pose a problem if one is trying to attribute the author with any particular abilities or knowledge. This may have come about due to the diversity of the commentaries and their being written sporadically over a period of time. Although the exact dating of the commentaries is difficult, it is interesting to note that the two works, from which the above forms are taken, (HQIG and In Osee), are separated by approximately fifteen to sixteen years.<sup>30</sup> It is conceivable that during this time the author's method of transliteration altered to suit his desire to explain in more depth the Hebrew words behind the Latin transliterations. In this way the particular method of transliteration seems to be 'custom-made' by the author and not merely inherited from Greek methodology.

### *c) The recognition of 'alef and 'ayin*

Closely associated with the last category is the case of words, in which either an *'alef* or *'ayin* has not been represented. In the last category we saw how in some instances

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<sup>30</sup> See Kelly pp. 291 and 155-6 for historical dating: HQIG c. 389-391; In Osee c. 406 C.E.

'alef and 'ayin were represented by H. It is more often the case however, as with the *He* and *Het*, that these two gutturals are not represented at all, as can be seen from these eighteen examples:

#### ARES

עֶרֶשׁ	'āres	In Amos 3. 13/15 (=12)
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#### BETHEL

[בֵּית־אֵל]	bēyt 'ēl	
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#### ASISE

אֲשִׁישֵׁי	'āšišēy	
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**This also applies for:**

AMITTAI, ANNA, ADAM, GAON, SAON, ULAM, SOEPH, HIS/HISSA, EDOM, EL, RO, ESDOD, OHIM, OPHIR.

The situation, though, is more complicated, because there is another representation of 'alef in the commentaries. As well as 'alef being substituted by H, it is also found transliterated by the letter E: as is shown in the word EIS, *man* (HQIG 32.28).

#### EIS

[אֵישׁ]	'īš	'man'
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Here the translation is VIR, and Jerome spells out the Hebrew word as ALEPH, IOD, SIN, which once again leads me to believe that he has tried to represent the 'aleph

with another vowel, just as in the case of HIS/HISSA above. There remains, however, no real answer why he did not use the same transliteration in both cases.

Characteristically 'ayin is also not transliterated, just as the case with 'alef. In the following example both gutturals have been left unrepresented:

EEBOR

אעבר	'e'ěbōr	'I will cross'
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The number of examples of the omission of 'ayin is also reasonably high, and other cases can be seen in these words:

ARBAIM, BEOR, AMMI, LAED, LETHECH SEORIM, AS, ABARTHI, EDEN, RAAT, RE, LAED, ENAM, ONAM, ARIM, MAOZ.

#### ***d) Doubling of consonants***

Another question that arises in the study of this list of Jerome's Hebrew transliterations is that often the words that are written contain doubled letters. Now when I realised this I at once wanted to know if this was just an irregularity of spelling or whether the author was trying to indicate that he understood that the Hebrew words contained a doubled letter. In the Tiberian punctuation a *dagesh forte* is used to alter a consonant from singular state e.g. /b/, to doubled state, e.g. /bb/. I have counted nineteen examples in the commentaries where a doubling has been

represented identically to the form found in the MT, and these all seem to be examples of *dagesh forte*. I have also found fourteen occurrences where it has been written differently to the MT. It must be stressed, though, that the *dagesh* of the Masoretes was not in use in Jerome's day, so his recognition of doubled letters cannot have been through this method of distinction. It is also worth noting that as Sperber points out, certain kinds of doubling were not strictly observed in Jerome's day, such as doubling due to the presence of the article.<sup>31</sup> The question then is how could Jerome have recognised the doubled letters correctly without punctuation marks? It is very possible that his Hebrew source text had the doubled consonants written *plene*, which would have shown clearly which letters were repeated. In this case Jerome could have easily copied the words with doubled letters without consciously understanding the grammar behind the doubling. Another answer could be that the pronunciation that Jerome learnt from his Hebrew tutor, Bar-anina, may have suggested the doubling. Or perhaps Jerome's transliterations were made from a Greek source, which indicated the doubling.

#### DOUBLING REPRESENTED AS IN THE MT

AMMI

עמי

ISSA

אשה

AMAGGENACH

אמגנך

GALLIM

גלים

ILLAUE

ילוה

METTA

When faced with the consonantal text as it appears on the left here, it seems remarkable that the transliterations we have are accurate to the MT on so many accounts. In certain cases, for example AMAGGENACH, DABBER, and YADABBER, the doubling is due to a particular grammatical rule, in this case the Piel doubled middle radical. In others, it is difficult to know without a great deal of knowledge of the language that a certain consonant is doubled, for example the word SGOLLA. In the cases of BAGGOIM, and AGGOI the doubling is due to the

<sup>31</sup> See Sperber. p.137.

מטה
BAGGOIM
ראו בגוים
MEGELLA
מגלה

presence of the article, (which contradicts Sperber's argument – see above). It is tempting to believe that the author of these transliterations understood the particular grammar relating to these points, especially as there is

no evidence of words in which the article appears without the necessary doubling. But this is rather more an argument out of silence than a well substantiated point. In the case of ILLAUE the doubling is due to the Niphal form, which requires the first radical's *dagesh forte*.

*Examples continued...*

MASSA/MESSA
משא
AGGOI
הגוי
SGOLLA
סגולה
BAMMA
במה המב
GIBBOR
אל גבור

AGGA
חגא אגח
HAMMA
חמה המח
IADABBER
נבל נבלה ידבר
DABBER
דבר

#### DOUBLING NOT REPRESENTED AS IN THE MT:

IOSEBETH
יושבת-מרות
BECHCHORA
בכורה
IARIB
ירב
ABARTHI
עברתי

**The BGDKPT letters:** some of the examples here support Paul Kahle's theory that in Jerome's day there was only one pronunciation of the BGDKPT letters, (Kahle, P.E.: *The Cairo Geniza*, London 1947, p.105). If we look at IOSEBETH or ABARTHI, for example, where we would

BADDAU

בדיו

CHOCAB

כוכב

NABAL

נבל

CALABIN

כלבים

CHI CALLOTH

כי קלות

expect a fricative pronunciation (IOSEVETH\* or AVARTHI\*), we find the plosive. This to me suggests two possibilities: either that there was, as Kahle speculates, one pronunciation of these letters in 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> century Palestine, or Jerome did not have a way of expressing the dual nature of the consonant in the Latin alphabet. The problem with this latter point is that Jerome represents the Kaph with both C

and CH as in the words CHI and CALABIN. And though there are two modes of representing the same letter, they do not always correspond to the same distinction that the MT makes. In the case of CHOCAB for example the two Kaphs are transliterated as if the first has been aspirated, the second plosive, when in fact our MT has the opposite. It should perhaps be noted here that Latin C was also used to represent Qoph as can be seen in the word CALLOTH. In all cases, too, Latin 'B' has been employed to represent Beth, whether plosive or fricative.

These few details point to an interesting question: did the author's pronunciation make any distinctions between plosive and fricative consonants? There are other examples in fact where Pe has been transliterated:

פרים	pārīm	'bulls'
פרי	p <sup>3</sup> rī	'fruit'
פעלך	pa'āl <sup>3</sup> kā	'your deed'

It is interesting to note that in both examples given here the author has transliterated a plosive Pe with PH: PHARIM, PHERI, PHALACH. Surely if the author had wanted to display his knowledge of Hebrew he would have used Latin P if he had wanted to preserve the hard sound, rather than PH, which has the mark of coming from the



Greek *Phi*. In a similar case, that of ESPHOCH, the Pe should be plosive because it starts a new syllable:

אשפך	'ešpōk	'I will pour/slaughter'
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But here again we find PH. Kahle once again points out that evidence from both the Septuagint and from Jerome suggests there being but one pronunciation in fourth to fifth century Palestine. He also mentions fourteen transliterations from Jerome, which represent /p/ only with the letter /f/, which support this argument<sup>32</sup>. So what can we learn about the author from these transliterations? I don't think there is reason to believe that the author was ignorant of consonantal doubling due to the large number of 'correctly' represented *dagesh fortes*. However, in cases where the *dagesh* is harder to discern such as the use of the *dagesh lene*, there is still confusion. Either the author was not able to distinguish or represent the difference, as can be seen in the use of B, C, and PH for Beth, Caph and Pe, or there was only one pronunciation of these letters, and an erratic method of transliteration is accountable for the discrepancies that I have found.

#### *e) The distinction of Shin, Sin and Sade*

This section shows numerous examples of the author's transliteration of the letters Sin, Shin and Sade. Jerome makes no distinction between the three letters in transliteration at all. All are represented by the Latin S. This perhaps suggests that the author was unable to represent the Shin's aspirate pronunciation by means of the Latin letters, but for the fact that there is one occurrence of the form SH being employed where it is expected, in accordance with the Tiberian pronunciation,

in the word TARSHISH:

תרשיש	taršiš	'Tarshish'
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However, this is the one exception in the examples, and I am convinced nonetheless, that this is a textual variation, possibly due to scribal modification, and like Sperber<sup>33</sup>, believe that the author was unable to represent the individual syllable sounds of Sin, Shin and Sade in the Latin alphabet, (as was also the case for the gutturals) and so represented them all with the letter S. Sutcliffe has pointed out Jerome's recognition of the sound of Shin: that it has a sound (a *stridor* or 'hissing') foreign to the Latin tongue, and therefore must be the aspirate Shin and not Sin: Jerome notes that

"Among the Hebrews there are three letters for S: one that is called SAMECH and is pronounced with the most ease, as if it describes our letter S: the second is called SIN, which has a hissing foreign to our tongue: the third is SADE, which sounds very unpleasant to our ears"<sup>34</sup>

It must be remembered that there were no diacritical signs in Jerome's Hebrew texts to distinguish the letters Sin and Shin, and Jerome seems only to know one pronunciation for Sin/Shin as Sutcliffe has shown at length in his study, *St. Jerome's pronunciation of Hebrew*.<sup>35</sup> A good example of this is to be found in Jerome's treatment of the word SAM, which he says, according to the context, may be either 'he placed' or 'there', but does not acknowledge the phonetic difference between the

<sup>32</sup> Kahle, p.105.

<sup>33</sup> Sperber, p.113.

<sup>34</sup> *Lib. Nom. Heb.*, P.L. 23, 783: 'Apud Hebraeos tres sunt S litterae: una quae dicitur SAMECH et simpliciter legitur, quasi per S nostram litteram describatur: alia SIN in qua stridor quidam non nostri sermonis interstrepit: tertia SADE quam nostrae aures penitus reformidant'.

<sup>35</sup> Sutcliffe, p.121.

two forms.<sup>36</sup> As Sutcliffe reminds us, “[Jerome’s] linguistic resources were more than adequate to enable him to inform his readers that a difference existed, had he wished to do so”.<sup>37</sup> He also argues that Jerome’s Jewish tutors might have made no distinction between Shin and Sin, which would also explain why Jerome made no attempt to record this difference, in spite of his linguistic ability to do so. The sheer number of words that lead to this conclusion is convincing:

*Words representing Shin with ‘S’*

MOSIM, SALOS, LACHIS, SETTIM, IS, ISSA, ASISE, SOPHAR, AS, SOHEL, SAON, BASAN, SOEPH, MESECH, GESEM, SANIM, RESEPH, MACHTES, ESDOD, NOGES, THIROS, SAMAIM, ASER, ENOS, SEMES, SAMIR, SALIS, SADUD, SACAD, ARASTHE

Jerome’s pronunciation of *sade* is quite detailed and sets the letter’s sound somewhere between *z* and *s*.<sup>38</sup> Once again in all the cases of transliteration of *sade* in the commentaries, it is represented by Latin *S*.

*Words representing Sade with ‘S’*

MASOR, HARUS, ARSOTH, MASUR, AMASIM, IOSER, IOES, SIIM, SOR, SUR, US

<sup>36</sup> *Comm. In Hab.*, 3, 4, P.L. 25, 1312B: ‘Verbum SAM pro qualitate loci et posuit intelligitur et ibi’.

<sup>37</sup> Sutcliffe, p. 122

### *f) Vowel changes*

Having examined the consonantal transliterations I would now like to look at some of the ways in which vowel patterns in the Latin transliterations differ from the vowels of the received Masoretic Text. After compiling the list of transliterations from the commentaries, it soon became very clear to me that there was some pattern to the differences in vowel quality. I have managed to categorise these differences into five classes: the first, in which an I in the MT is represented by E in Jerome, (and vice versa); the second where I is represented by A; the third where O is represented by U; the fourth where A is represented by E; and the fifth where A is represented by O. This shows considerable fluidity between the vowel sounds in Jerome, which is not entirely surprising for a number of reasons. Although these have been found to be general rules, they should not be considered completely consistent, because certain exceptions do occur. In each category the vowel change can occur both ways, for example I to E, or E to I. These should perhaps be two distinct categories but it is easier to classify them together for the sake of the conciseness of this study. An appropriate question to pose here is why there are these changes in vowel quality between the Masoretic Text and Jerome's transliterations. As has been postulated in a previous paragraph, this could show a difference in Jerome's Hebrew pronunciation, or the grafting of Mishnaic Hebrew forms onto Biblical Hebrew as I have already shown Kutscher to believe.<sup>39</sup> Jerome learnt his Hebrew in the desert of Chalcis, which could explain some difference in pronunciation, if we could know for certain the local pronunciation that he learnt. The problem is a difficult one, though, as very little

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<sup>38</sup> *Comm. In Isai.*, 11, 1, P.L. 24, 144 C: 'Sciendum quod hic NESER per SADE litteram scribatur, cuius proprietatem et sonum inter z et s Latinus sermo non exprimit. Est enim stridulus et strictis dentibus vix linguae impressione profertur'. (For a more detailed explanation see Sutcliffe, p.124.)

<sup>39</sup> Kutscher, p.145

written evidence survives to corroborate this theory. Another explanation could be that the quality of the Latin vowels has altered slightly since Jerome's period, so that for example there is less distinction between a long A and long O sound. When Jerome heard a *qames hatup* for example, he might have regarded this as more of an A sound, and therefore chosen to represent it with A. These answers, though, are pure conjecture, given that it is hard to understand motive from such evidence. What we do have, though, are these general rules, which do suggest either a difference in pronunciation, or an altered vowel quality of some kind. Here are some examples of each kind of vowel change:

### *Masoretic 'T' represented by Jerome as 'E'*

#### IESAG

יִשְׁאַג	yiš'āg	'will roar'
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This is the imperfect form of the root יִשְׁאַג, meaning 'to roar'. The vowel change seems to be one, which resembles the common change in Biblical Greek transliterations, that is from Hebrew *hīriq* to Greek *Epsilon*, such as MT **giddēl** represented as γεδδηλ.<sup>40</sup>

#### IARIB

יָרִיב	yārēb	'Jarib'
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The word IARIB occurs in Hos. 5:13 and 10:6 as the name of an Assyrian King, probably Tiglath Pileser III. It is possible that Jerome was thinking of the word **yārīb**, meaning 'opponent' or 'adversary', which is found in Psalm 35:1, (or the form **yārībay**), when he chose 'T' as the second vowel letter.

*This also applies for:*

ALECHCHA, BECHCHORA, METTA, AL SEGIONOTH, METHNOSASOTH, HAIECBA, MEN, NESPHE, NETHAB, MESRAIM, IETHMAU, NEPTALTI.

In these examples I am particularly interested by the word *men*, (=Heb. מֶן) because it is a word that occurs frequently, and the sound would therefore be very familiar to any learner of the language. The E class vowel in this word makes it reminiscent of Syriac *men*, and METHNOSASOTH, being a grammatical form, (the feminine plural Hithpael participle) also shows this preference for the E vowel, which is present in the Syriac *Ethpeel* form. This possibly demonstrates a facet of the pronunciation of Hebrew that Jerome learned, but could also be representative of the quality of Jerome's E and I vowels, which might differ somewhat from modern English pronunciation.

#### *Masoretic 'T' represented by Jerome's 'A'*

##### LACERATH

הכֹּן לִקְרֹאת אֱלֹהֵיךָ	hikōn liqra't 'ēlōheykā	'prepare to meet your God'
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##### ANIAN

עֲנִין	'inyan
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This word, found in Ecclesiastes, is probably an Aramaic loan-word according to Brown-Driver-Briggs, and this could explain the pronunciation that Jerome notes here, in light of the greater frequency of the 'a' vowel in Aramaic.

*This also applies for:*

<sup>40</sup> Sperber, p.164, > Aquila: Ezra. 2.47.

SADDA/SADDOTH, GABAA, SINTHOROTH, NAAMATHI, CARIA, SACCHORE, MACHTHAB,  
MABSAR, SIS, SANNOOTH

*Masoretic O represented by Jerome's U or MT U represented by Jerome's O*

SOCOTH

סכת	sukōt	'booths' or 'Succoth'
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Jerome's transliteration can possibly be explained by the word **sōk** (also **sāk**), a form of **sukōt** found in Psalm 27:5, or more likely by the Septuagintal transliteration Σοκχωθ.

*This also applies for:*

MASUR, SAFUN, MUTOTH, HAIUM, AROM

*Masoretic 'A' represented by Jerome's 'E'*

ESDOD

אשדוד	'ašdōd	'Ashdod'
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EMSA LI

אמצה לי	'amṣāh lī	'my strength'
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Brown-Driver-Briggs notes the form **'emṣ<sup>3</sup>'āh l<sup>3</sup>yōš<sup>3</sup>bēy**, which preserves the 'e' vowel pronunciation of this word, after the Septuagintal and Vulgate versions of Zech. 12:5, ("...the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be my strength").

*This also applies for:*

PHARES, ENASSE, APHPHO, NEMER, THEMRURIM, BER SABEE, SEIR, SABE, SABA,  
GEZEM, CHERMEL, IADAU, BASARI, NEPTULE, BAEMUNATHO, HEIEU, HAREB



### Masoretic 'A' represented by Jerome's 'O'

#### SACHAR

שָׂכַר	šākōr	'to hire' or 'reward'
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This word, from Genesis 30:16, is found as the *infinitive absolute* in the Masoretic Text, but Jerome's transliteration seems to resemble more the *perfect* form or perhaps, more likely, the noun šākār.

#### SINAC

צִינֹק	šīnōq	'pillory' (Jer. 29:26)
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#### SOHEL

שֹׁהַל	šahāl
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I have only managed to find these three examples of this kind of vowel change in the transliterations in Jerome's commentaries.

### g) Segolate nouns

#### SADECENU

צִדְקֵנוּ	šīdqeñū
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Jerome's vowel pattern is suggestive of the denominative verb *sadeyq*, and not of the noun *sedeq* as is found in the MT. At first I was interested to know if this word did not develop from a previous a-stem form, as is the case with such words as *melek*. This would have accounted for the vowel difference, but I can find no evidence for this as the word in all its forms preserves an original i-stem vowel. This is why I contend that Jerome has provided the vowel pattern consistent with the verb vocalisation rather than the nominal form. Whether this is a different reading or just a difference in vowels is yet unknown because I can find no manuscript evidence to support the denominative verb here. Moreover, Jerome's translation of this form is IUSTITIA NOSTRA, which tends to support the latter idea that it is just a difference in vowel quality again. Certainly the pronominal suffix has the expected vowel pattern

~enu, it is just the first two of Jerome's vowels that are more like those of the verb. Kutscher notes that in the Septuagint the segolates always have an anaptyctic vowel, for example Mōloch (= molek), but that in the second column of the Hexapla the second vowel never appears and the first always keep the original quality, for example abd = 'ebed. It would be greatly desirable to have more examples of segolate nouns in Jerome's transliterations, but sadly this is the only example I have found. It neither shows the anaptyctic vowel of the Septuagint, nor the Hexaplaric form.

#### ***h) The imperfect form***

In the list of Hebrew transliterations I have also found three examples of words that might give an indication of Jerome's understanding of the *imperfect* form. The first of these is the irregular verb ירד, which is a פ"י verb. The transliteration shows the expected form of the vowel pattern as consistent with Biblical Hebrew.

IERED

ירד	yērēd
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The second example, however, shows a different pattern. IADAU is an interesting case as the Biblical Hebrew form has the *imperfect*, while the transliteration seems to show the vowel pattern of the *perfect*. Yet the form is not exact to either form, but closer to the vowels of the *perfect*, than to those of the *imperfect*. Jerome's translation of the word is SCITOTE, which indicates that he believed the form to be actually the *imperative* plural, not the *imperfect*. This is also very interesting, because the form he has represented is clearly not the imperative of ידע, which is irregular, and is עדו. The critical apparatus does not indicate any forms which would support the *imperative* form found in the translation. Jerome might have been thinking of the Hebrew idiom, though, by which the *imperfect* represents the *imperative*. This would require the

verb to be prefixed with a *waw*, however, and the first verb to be the imperative, so as to read, 'come oh days of recompense, and Israel, know!'. I do not see any evidence for this textual emendation, though, but this would be the only case where the *imperfect* could represent the *imperative*. As it stands, Jerome's translation and transliteration are both inconsistent with the Biblical Hebrew forms found in the Masoretic text. So can we then infer from this that Jerome was not aware of this most common irregular verb? Or is it that he was translating the Hebrew less literally, as is often necessary for better Latin syntax. There are various other manuscript readings for the phrase ידעו ישראל, for example the LXX that suggests וירע לישראל. This form does have the *waw-consecutive*, but with a different verb, so should not be relied upon. I think there is little evidence to suggest a textual variant here, because Jerome's translation could possibly be a *explanation* of his understanding of the text's meaning. It is also clearly a representation of a plural verb form, but the vowel pattern remains difficult to assign the verb either the quality of *imperfect* or *imperative*.

#### IADAU

ידעו	yēd <sup>3</sup> ū
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The third example is another case of the *imperfect* in IADABBER. With the exception of the first semi-vowel, which is a *sheva*, the vowel pattern is in keeping with the Masoretic pronunciation. The first vowel conforms to the first type of *sheva* representation explained above, in which the *sheva* is represented by an A vowel. There is also a representation of the doubled middle radical of the Piel form. So with this in mind it can be conjectured that the author has an understanding of the *imperfect* form.

## IADABBER

נבל ובלה ידבר	nābāl n <sup>3</sup> bālāh y <sup>3</sup> dabbēr
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*i) The Niphal form*

As regards the Niphal form, there is one occurrence of this form that I was able to find in Jerome's works. Here the effect of having the final He, a *mater lectionis*, can be seen in the written 'e' of the transliteration, (suggesting that it is to be pronounced), although the letter He is not itself represented. The doubled *lamed* is representative of the doubling found in the Niphal form.

## ILLAUE

ילוה	yillāveh	'he will be joined'
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This form is the Niphal imperfect of the root לׁוה, meaning 'be joined', and Jerome's transliteration is remarkably accurate, both representing the doubled lamed, and also the consonantal waw with the 'U'.

## NEPTALTI

נפתלתי	nīptaltī
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*j) The Hithpoel form*

The one occurrence of a Hithpoel form preserves the 'e' vowel, which is reminiscent of the Syriac *Ethpeel* vocalisation. This vowel difference has already been noted in the form of the partitive *min*, represented in the transliteration as MEN.

## METHNOSASOTH

מתנוססות	miṭnōs <sup>3</sup> sōt	'fleeing', 'escaping'
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Jerome's transliteration here shows a recognition of the feminine plural form of the Hithpoel participle of the root נׁס.

### k) The furtive patah

Words that contain a *furtive patah* in the Masoretic Text are found in the list of transliterations six times, but there is no representation of the final Het in the majority of cases. The first example here, however, does show this in the second form quoted, RUHA. The Het, though, precedes the A vowel, and therefore shows either a different pronunciation to the Masoretic form, or Jerome's particular transliteration method. It should be noted that the form RUHA only occurs once, in comparison with RUA, which occurs more frequently in the commentaries. In the other cases there seems little reason to believe that the *furtive patah* as we know it in the MT has the same pronunciation in Jerome's Hebrew. This may be for the reason that the MT pronunciation was laid down much later than that of Jerome's Hebrew, and that, as we have already seen, his phonetic value of the 'guttural' *He* differed greatly from that used by the Masoretes.

#### RUA/ RUHA

רוח	rūah	'wind', 'spirit'
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#### MASPHA

מספה	m <sup>3</sup> sapēah	'joining'
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Here Jerome's word seems to correspond to the Piel participle of מספח, but does not show any evidence of there being a pronounced *furtive patah*.

#### CISOA

קיא צואה	qī' šō'āh	'vomiting up filth'
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*This also applies for:*

IARE, MAPHATE, BAR.

### l) The construct plural form

In three examples the form of the construct plural of the noun is found. In all three words the construct ending is represented by the letter 'e'. In the absence of vowel marks in the consonantal text I am surprised that Jerome's transliterations all have this form, especially when so many variant vowel readings have been pointed out already. This may indicate that the pronunciation of the construct ending is similar to that of the MT.

#### SACCHORE

שכורי	šikōrēy	'drunken' (m. pl. construct)
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#### NEPTULE

נפתולי אלהים נפתלתי	naptulēy ʾēlōhīm niptaltī	'the wrestlings of God I have wrestled'
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#### MOSCHE

משכי־קשת	mōškēy qešet	'archers' (lit. 'those drawing a bow', see Is. 66:19).
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### m) Pronominal suffix forms

#### HARA LACH

חרה־לך
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#### AMAGGENACH

אמגנך
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#### ALECHCHA

אלי־חכך שפר
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#### DABARACH

דבריך
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#### PHALACH

פעלך
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#### ELAI

אלי
-----

#### ELI

אלי
-----

From the set of examples found here, there is good reason to believe that the author of these transliterations recognised the forms of the Hebrew pronominal suffixes. As has already been pointed out certain forms, such as the second person singular, reflect the influence of Mishnaic Hebrew or some other pronunciation. Kahle gives extensive evidence of other forms such as Septuagintal forms and those from the second

DODACH

777

DODI

777

column of Origen's Hexapla, which all show this 2<sup>nd</sup> person sing. masc. form, (Kahle, pp.95-6). This can be seen in the first five examples. Barr, as well, points out that this is typical of the Palestinian pronunciation of Jerome's time, (Barr. p.215). Jerome is also very careful to examine the differences between ELAI and ELI, showing that he knows that one means 'unto me' and the other 'my God'. Unfortunately there are no examples of other suffixes in transliteration, so no further conclusions can be drawn regarding Jerome's recognition of these forms.

In conclusion, it can be said that the transliterated Hebrew words that are found in the *Excerpta de Psalterio* are part of a much larger quantity of Hebrew words occurring in the other commentaries. The examples taken from the *Excerpta* alone do not constitute a broad enough study to form general conclusions about Jerome's knowledge, but should be seen as representative of Jerome's use of Hebrew throughout the commentaries. Taken together, these words in their transliterated form convey an idea of Jerome's understanding of the Hebrew language of his tutors, and also of his method of transliteration.

From the examples found in the commentaries, specific knowledge of Jerome's Hebrew can be gleaned. We have seen how Jerome's transliterations show a tendency towards the 'a' vowel, possibly a grafting from Mishnaic Hebrew, and that this is especially common in his representation of the *sheva*. His representation of '*aleph*' and '*ayin*' is inconsistent and often completely omitted. Jerome's awareness of doubled letters seems to be quite apparent, but this may be understood better if his original Hebrew text represented doubled letters by writing them twice, in contrast to the



Masoretic usage of the *dagesh*. There is still question of his pronunciation of the BGDKPT letters, and the transliterations suggest, but do not prove Kahle's theory, that they had only one vocalisation. His distinction of Sin, Shin and Sade is minimal: he represents all three with the letter S. He does however acknowledge the *hissing* sound of Shin (and Sade), which leads us to believe that he pronounced a Shin rather than Sin for the most cases. We are also greatly in debt to Sutcliffe for his collation of the evidence in this case. With respect to Jerome's understanding of Hebrew Grammar, we have looked at several forms of Hebrew words. Segolate nouns appear to retain the anaptyctic vowel as in the Septuagint, but in some places, although his vocalisation does not agree with that of the Masoretic text, it seems to reflect more that of cognate words. Jerome's vocalisation of the perfect and imperfect forms is erratic, but in some cases comes close to the Masoretic forms, such as IADABBER. In Jerome's representation of the Hithpael we see the predominance of the 'e' vowel, similar to that found in Syriac *Ethpeel*, a tendency that can be more generally seen as a change from Masoretic 'i' to Jerome's 'e'. In most cases the furtive patah of the MT is also not represented. The construct plural forms, however, are represented identical to the Masoretic forms in the few cases they occur. The pronominal suffix forms reflect the grafting of Mishnaic Hebrew, identical to the pausal form as is found in the word AMAGGENACH.

## Conclusion

From the three parts to this study it is worth providing a concise recapitulation of the conclusions drawn concerning Jerome's *Excerpta de psalterio*. These can be summarised as follows:

1. Although Jerome's *Excerpta de Psalterio* clearly shows a debt to Origen's work, it is totally in line with contemporary practice for Jerome to disguise his borrowings, and this is itself admitted in Jerome's description of the work in the introduction.
2. Until now scholarship has been concentrated on ascribing which passages of the *Excerpta* belong directly to Origen, and therefore decrediting Jerome with their authorship. This study has examined the *Excerpta*'s unmistakably Hieronymian qualities: the methodology and attention to Hebrew philological detail, and has shown that the work is in keeping with Jerome's own style and technique, not that of Origen.
3. Jerome's methodology owes much to his predecessors, bringing various types of exegesis together, wherever seems appropriate to him, in order to discover the underlying 'truth' of the text. This is especially true of those passages where necessity requires a study of the Hebrew behind the Greek and Latin translations. This quest for the *Hebraica veritas* sets Jerome aside from the other commentators, and shows again that the *Excerpta* is written in his particular commentary style.

4. The transliterated Hebrew words that are found in the *Excerpta de Psalterio* are part of a much larger quantity of Hebrew words occurring in the other commentaries. The examples taken from the *Excerpta* alone do not constitute a broad enough study to form general conclusions about Jerome's knowledge, but should be seen as representative of Jerome's use of Hebrew throughout the commentaries. Taken together, these words in their transliterated form convey an idea of Jerome's understanding of the Hebrew language of his tutors, and also of his method of transliteration.

LOCATION OF HEBREW WORD IN TRANSLITERATION	HEBREW TRANSLITERATION	JEROME'S LATIN TRANSLATION	TRANSLATION OF JEROME'S LATIN; OF TEXT FROM B.H.S. (IF DIFFERENT)	WORD FROM B.H.S. CONSONANTAL TEXT	WORD FROM B.H.S. IN TRANSLITERATION
IN ABDIAM 17/18	SARID	RELIQUUS	REMAINING; A SURVIVOR	שריד	sārīd
20/21	SAPHARAD	BOSPHORUS	BOSPHORUS	ספרד	s'pārād
	MOSIM	SALVATORES	SAVIORS	משעים	mōšī'im
	PHELETIM	SALVATI	THOSE SAVED	-	-
IN IONAM prol.	AMITTAI	VERITAS	TRUTH	אמתי	'āmitay
I.3	TARSHISH	MARE	SEA	תרשיש	ṭaršīš
	IERED	DESCENDIT	WENT DOWN	ירד	yērēd
II.1	DAG GADOL	PISCIS GRANDIS	LARGE FISH	דג גדול	dāg gādōl
III.4	SALOS	TRES	THREE (M.SING.); THREE (F.SING)	שלש [שלש]	šālōšet
	ARBAIM	QUADRAGINTA	FORTY	ארבעים	'arba'im
IV 2/3	ANNA	OBSECO	I BESEECH	אנה	'annah
4	HARA LACH	IRATUS ES TU	ARE YOU ANGRY?	חרה לך	ḥarāh laḵ
6	CICEION	CUCURBITA / HEDERA	GOURD / IVY; PLANT	קיקיון	qīqāyōn
IN MICHAELAM I.1.10/15	IOSEBETH MAROTH	HABITATIO AMARITUDINIS	HOUSE OF BITTERNESS; INHABITANT OF MAROTH	יושבת מרות	yōšebet mārōt
	BACHIM	PLANCTUM / FLETUM	WEEPING; DO NOT WEEP	בכו אל תבכו [בכים]	bākō 'al tībkeh [bākīm]
	LACHIS	AMBULATIO	WALKING	לכיש	lakīš
II. 5.6	NESICHE ADAM	PRIMATES HOMINES	CHIEF MEN; PRINCES OF MEN	נסיכי אדם	n'sīkey 'ādām
6. 3/5	SETTIM	LIGNA	WOOD; SHITTIM	שטים	šittīm
	BEOR	IN PELLE	IN SKIN / HIDE; BEOR	בעור	b'or



10/16	AMMI	POPULUS MEUS	MY PEOPLE	עמי	'ammī
7.1/4	BECHCHORA	GROSSOS FICORUM	EARLY FIG	בכורה	bikūrāh
5/7	MABUCHA	OBSIDIO / CUSTODIA	SIEGE / GUARD; THEIR CONFUSION	מבוכתם [מבוכה]	m <sup>3</sup> būkaiam [m <sup>3</sup> būkah]
	RUA	SANCTUM SPIRITUM	HOLY SPIRIT	רוח	rūah
8/13	MASOR	DE TYRO / MUNITIO	FROM TYRE / ARMS	מצור	māsōr
18/20	LAED	ULTRA / IN FINEM	LATER / AT THE END; FOR EVER	לעד	la'ad
IN OSEE I 2.13	-IM	NUMERO PLURALI GENERE MASCULINO	MASCULINE PLURAL SUFFIX	יִם	-īm
	-OTH	NUMERO PLURALI GENERE FEMININO	FEMININE PLURAL SUFFIX	וֹת	-ōt
16/17	IS	VIR	MAN	איש	īš
	ISSA	UXOR / VIRAGO	WOMAN	אשה	'issah
3.1	ASISE	VINACIA	GRAPE-SKINS; RAISIN CAKES (OF)	אשישי	'āšišēy
2/3	LETHECH SEORIM	NEBEL VINI	A LETECH OF WINE; A LETECH OF BARLEY	לתך שערים	letek š'ōrīm
4.13	BAMA	IN EXCELSIS	IN HIGH PLACES	-	-
15/16	BETHEL	DOMUS DEI	HOUSE OF GOD	[בית אל]	bēy'el
17/19	RUA	VENTUS	SPIRIT	רוח	rūah
5.3/4	GAON	INIURIA / SUPERBIA	SUFFERING / PRIDE; EXALTATION OF	גאון	g'ōn
II 5. 8/9	SOPHAR	CLARA / BUCCINA / TUBA	HORN / TRUMPET	שופר	šōpār
12	AS	TINEA	GRUB; MOTH	עש	'āš
13	MEZUR	VINCULUM	FETTER; HIS WOUND	מזור	m <sup>3</sup> zōrō
	IARIB	ULTOR	VENGER	ירב	yārēb
	IARIM	SILVAE	WOODS	-	-
	CARIATH IARIM	VILLA SILVARUM	HOUSE OF WOOD	-	-
14/15	SOHEL	LEAENA	LIONESS	שחל	šahāl

7. 11/12	PHOTA	COLUMBA SEDUCTA	SILLY DOVE	פֹּתָה	פֹּתָה
8. 1/4	ALECHCHA SOPHAR	IN GUTTURE TUO SIT TUBA	(LIT.) THE TRUMPET IS IN YOUR THROAT; ~LIPS	אֶל־הֶחֱךָ שֹׁפָר	אֶל־הֶחֱכָא שֹׁפָר
5/6	SABABIM	ARANEARUM TELAS	SPIDERS' WEBS; SPLINTERS	שִׁבְבִּים	שִׁבְבִּים
	SABABUM	SEDUCENS / DECIPIENS	LEADING ASIDE / DECEIVING	-	-
9. 7	IADAU	SCITOTE	KNOW (IMPER.); WILL KNOW (PL.)	יָדְעוּ	יָדְעוּ
11/13	BASARI	CARO MEA	MY FLESH; IN MY TURNING ASIDE	בָּשָׂרִי	בָּשָׂרִי
	SUR	SILEX	FLINT / HARD ROCK	-	-
	SOR	TYRUS	TYRE	-	-
III. 10. 11	ABARTHI	TRANSIVI	I PASSED ACROSS	עָבַרְתִּי	עָבַרְתִּי
13	ARASTHEM	ARASTIS	ARASTIS; YOU HAVE PLOUGHED	הִרְשַׁתֶּם	הִרְשַׁתֶּם
14/15	SAON	TUMULTUS	CLASH OF BATTLE	שֹׁאֵן	שֹׁאֵן
11. 5/7	BADDAU	BRACHIA ILLIUS	HIS ARMS; HIS BARS	כְּדִין	כְּדִין
8/9	AMAGGENACH	PROTEGAM TE	I WILL COVER/ PROTECT YOU	אֶמְגֹּן	אֶמְגֹּן
10/11	MAIM	AQUAE	WATERS	מַיִם	מַיִם
	MEIAM	DE MARI	FROM THE SEA	מַיִם	מַיִם
12. 2/6	ISAR	DIRIGENTIS	LEADING; HE PERSEVERED	יָשָׁר	יָשָׁר
11	SURIM	BOBUS	BULLOCKS	שׁוּרִים	שׁוּרִים
	SARIM	PRINCIPES	CHIEFS	שָׂרִים	שָׂרִים
	GALLIM	ACERVI	MULTITUDES; HEAPS	גָּלִים	גָּלִים
13. 3	ARBE	LOCUSTA	LOCUST; A LATTICED OPENING	אַרְבֵּה	אַרְבֵּה
	OROBBA	FUMARIUM	SMOKE; CHAMBER	-	-
14/15	DABARACH	SERMONES TUI	YOUR WORDS; YOUR PLAGUES	דְּבָרֶיךָ	דְּבָרֶיךָ



	DABAR	VERBUM	WORD	דבר	dābār
	DEBER	MORS	DEATH	דבר	deber
14. 2/4	PHARIM	VITULAE	HEIFERS; BULLS	פריים	pārim
	PHERI	FRUCTUM	FRUIT	פרי	p <sup>3</sup> rī
IN IOELEM 1. 2/3	EEZINU	AURE	IN THE EAR; GIVE EAR TO	האזינו	ha'āzīnū
4	GEZEM	ERUCA	CATERPILLAR; LOCUSTS	גזם	gāzām
13/14	ARASA	COETUS	ASSEMBLY / COMPANY	עצרה?	'aṣārāh
15	SADDAI	POTENS	POWERFUL; SHADDAI	שדי	šaday
19/20	NAOTH	PLANA CAMPORUM	FLAT FIELDS; PASTURES OF	נאות	n <sup>3</sup> ōt
2. 1/11	SALA	FENESTRAE	WINDOWS	-	-
	EDEN	PARADISUS	PARADISE; EDEN	עדן	'ēden
15/17	ULAM	ANTE FORES TEMPLI	BEFORE THE DOORS OF THE TEMPLE; VESTIBULE	אולם	'ulām
28/32	ESPHOCH	EFFUSIO	A POURING OUT; I WILL POUR	אשפוך	'eṣpōk
	PHALETA	SALVATIO / SALVATUS	SALVATION / HIM SAVED; ESCAPE	פליטה	p <sup>3</sup> lētāh
	SARIDIM	ANNUNTIAN	ANNOUNCING; SURVIVORS	שרידים	š <sup>3</sup> rīdīm
3. 4/6	GALILOTH	GALILAEA	GALILEE	-	-
7/8	SABAIM	CAPTIVITAS	CAPTURE; SABAEANS	שבאים	š <sup>3</sup> bā'im
14/15	HARUS	CAUSA / IUDICIUM	REASON / JUDGEMENT; DECISION	חרון	hārūṣ
IN AMOS 1. 1.1	NOCEDIM	IN PASTORALIS	AMONG THE SHEPHERDS	נקדים	nōq <sup>3</sup> dīm
2	IESAG	RUGIET	WILL ROAR	ישאג	yiṣ'ag
	CHERMEL	CARMELUS	CARMEL	כרמל	karmel



3	ARSOTH	TRIBULA	THRESHING SLEDGES	חרצות	hāruṣōt
4/5	AUEN	CAMPUM IDOLI	IDOLS; AVEN	און	'āven
2. 1/3	SAON	TUBA / BUCCINA	TRUMPET / HORN; UPROAR	שאון	ša'ōn
	THERUA	TUBA / BUCCINA	TRUMPET / HORN; SHOUTING	תרועה	t <sup>3</sup> rū'āh
	SOPHAR	TUBA / BUCCINA	TRUMPET / HORN	שופר	šōpār
3. 11	SOR	TYRUS	TYRE	-	-
	SUR	SILEX	FLINT / HARD ROCK	-	-
	SAR	TRIBULATIO	TROUBLES	-	-
13/15	ARES	GRABATUM	LOW SOUCH; TO THE GROUND	ארץ	'āreṣ
II. 4. 1/3	BASAN	VACCAE PINGUAE	FAT COWS; BASHAN	בשן	bāšan
	SANNOTH	CONTI / CLIPEI / ARMA	PIKES / SHIELDS / WEAPONS; HOOKS	צנות	ṣinnōt
4/6	THODA	ACTIONEM GRATIARUM	ACT OF THANKS- GIVING	תודה	tōdāh
	NADABOTH	VOLUNTARIAE OBLATIONES	FREEWILL OFFERINGS	נדבות	n <sup>3</sup> dābōt
7/8	IARE	LUNA	MOON	[ירח]	yārēah
4. 12/13	ECEB	POSTQUAM	AFTER	עקב	'ēqeb
	HECHIN LACERATH ELOIAH	PRAEPARARE UT ADVERSERIS DEO TUO	PREPARE TO MEET YOUR GOD	הכון לקראת אליהך	hikōn liqra' t' ēlōheykā
	ARIM	MONTES	MOUNTAINS	הרים	hārīm
	RUA	VENTUM	SPIRIT	רוח	rūah
	MESSIO	CHRISTUM SUUM	HIS ANNOINTED; WHAT IS HIS THOUGHT?	מזה-שחן	mah šēhō
	SIA	ELOQUIUM	ELOQUENCE; THOUGHT	שחן	šēhō
5. 4/5	SABE	UTRUMQUE	EACH, [BEER]SHEBA	שבע	šēba'
7/9	CHASIL	ORIONA	ORION	כסיל	k <sup>3</sup> stl

5. 16/17	EEBOR	PERTRANSIBO	I WILL TRAVEL ACROSS	אעבר	'e'ēbōr
5. 25/27	CHOCAB	LUCIFER	LIGHT-BRINGING; STAR OF	כוכב	kōkab
III. 7. 1/3	GOZI	TONSOR / TONSUM	BARBER / CUT; MOWINGS OF	גזי	-
7/9	BAMOTH	EXCELSA IDOLORUM	HIGH PLACES OF IDOLS	במות	bāmōt
14/17	BOGER	ARMENTARIUM	OF HERDSMEN	-	-
	BETH ISAAC	DOMUS RISUS	HOUSE OF LAUGHS	בית ייִשחק	bēyt yiśḥāq
8. 11/14	ASAMATH	IDOLUM	IDOL; ASHIMACH OF	אשמת	'ašmat
9. 7/8	CIR	FOVEA	PIT; KIR	קיר	qīr
	CAPHTHORIM	ALIENIGENAE	FOREIGN (ADJ.); CAPHTOR	כפתור	kaptōr
IN ECCLESIASTEN 1.2	ABAL ABALIM	VANITAS VANITATUM	VANITY OF VANITIES	הכל הכלים	hābel hābālīm
5	SOEPH	ASPIRAT	BREATHES; PANTS	שואף	šō'ēp
13	ANIAN	OCCUPATUS	BUSY; BUSINESS	ענין	'inyan
2.2	MOLAL	AMENTIA	MADNESS; IS MAD	מזולל	m <sup>3</sup> hōlāl
8	SADDA	MENSARUM SPECIES	TYPE OF TABLE	שדה	šidāh
	SADDOOTH	MENSARUM SPECIES	TYPE OF TABLES	שדות	šidōt
5.5	SEGAGA	IGNORANTIA	IGNORANCE; MISTAKE	שגגה	š <sup>3</sup> gāgāh
6.9	RUHA	SPIRITUS / VENTUS	SPIRIT / BREATH	רוח	rūah
7.8	MATTHANA	DONUM	GIFT; BRIBE	מתנה	matānāh
28/30	ESEBON	NUMERUM	NUMBER; DEVICES	השבנות	hišbōnōt
8.6/7	RAATH	MALITIA	WICKEDNESS	רעת	rā'at
	DATH	SCIENTIA	KNOWLEDGE	דעת	da'at
12	MAATH	CENTIES	ONE HUNDRED TIMES	מאת	m <sup>3</sup> 'at
10.4	MARPHE	SANITAS / CURATIO	HEALTH / HEALING; DEFERENCE	מרפה	marpēh



12.5	AAGAB	LOCUSTA	GRASSHOPPER	הקב	heḡagāḇ
IN PSALMOS 2	ABIONA	CAPPARIM	CAPER-BERRY	האביונה	hā'ābyōnāh
	NESCU BAR	ADORATE FILIUM	WORSHIP THE SON	-	-
	LEHI	MAXILLA	JAW	-	-
8	IAHO	DEI VOCABULUM	NAME OF GOD	יהוה	'āḏōnāy
	ELOIM	DEUM	GOD	אלהים	'ēlohīm
	MALACHIM	ANGELI	ANGELS / MESSENGERS	[מלאכים]	mal'ākīm
13	NABAL	INSIPIENS	FOOLISH	נבל	nāḇāl
21	BASAN	IGNOMINIA	DISHONOUR	בשן	bāṣān
	CALABIN	CANES / VENATORES	DOGS / HUNTERS	כלבים	kālāḇīm
23	SABAOTH	OMNIPOTENS	ALL-POWERFUL	צבאות	šāḇā'ōt
26	ZOTH	UNUM NEUTRALI GENERE	ONE THING (NEUTER)	זאת	z'ōt
59	GEMELA	-	GEMELAH	גיא-מלח	gēy' melah
87	RAFAIM	GIGANTAS / MEDICI	GIANTS / DOCTORS	רפאים	rāḡā'īm
88	RAAB	SUPERBUS	PROUD	רחב	rāḡab
90	SADDAI	-	THE HIGHEST	[עליון]	'ēlyōn
108	SATAN	DIABOLUS	DEVIL	שטן	śāṭān
115	KIVZHB	MENDAX / MENDACIUM / DEFICIT	LIAR / A LIE / LACKING; LIE	כזב	kāzāḇ
117	OSIANNA	SALUUM ME FAC	SAVE ME	הושיעה נא	hōšī'ah nā'
131	NAZER	CONSECRATUM	HOLY	נזיר	nizrō
134	SUGULLA	PECULIUS	SPECIAL / OF ONE'S OWN	סגולתו	s <sup>3</sup> gullāṭō
146	ALLELUIA	LAUDATE DOMINUM / IA	PRaise THE LORD / JAHWEH	הללו יה	hal'lū yāh
QUAESTIONES HEBRAICAE IN GENESIM 1.1	BRESITH	IN PRINCIPIO	IN THE BEGINNING	בראשית	b'rē'šīt

	BABEN	IN FILIO	IN THE SON	[בבן]	babēn
1.2	MARAHAEFETH	FEREBATUR	WAS CARRIED	מרחפת	m <sup>3</sup> rahepet
2.8	MIMIZRA	CONTRA ORIENTEM	FROM THE EAST	[מקדם]	miqqedem
2.15	EDEN	VOLUPTAS	DESIRE	עון	'ēden
2.21	THARDEMA	EXTASUS / EXCESSUS MENTIS	ECSTASY / MADNESS	תרדמה	tardēmāh
2.23	HIS	VIR	MAN	[איש]	'š
	HISSA	MULIER	WOMAN	אשה	'ššah
3.1	AROM	SAPIENS	WISE	ערום	'ārūm
3.8	BARUA HAIUM	AD VESPERAM	IN THE EVENING	לרוח היום [ברוח]	l <sup>3</sup> rūah hayyōm
3.14	AFAR	FAVILLA / PULVUS	ASH / DUST	עפר	'āpār
4.1	CANITHI	POSSEDI	I POSSESSED	קניתי	qānītī
4.7	HATAH	PECCATUM	SIN	חטאת	haṭā'ī
4.16	NOD	NAID	NOD	נוד	nōd
14.5	BAHEM	CUM EIS	WITH THEM	[בהם]	bāhem
15.2	MESECH BETHI	FILIUS MASEC	THE SON OF MASEC	משק ביתי	mešeq bēyṭī
17.317.3	FARA	ONAGER / RUSTICUS	WILD ASS / COUNTRYMAN	-	-
	BERITH	FOEDUS / PACTUM	AGREEMENT / PACT	ברית	bērīt
	SARATH	LEPRA	LEPER	-	-
21.31	BER SABEE	SEPTEM AGNAE	SEVEN LAMBS	בער שבע	b <sup>3</sup> ēr šāba'
	SABECH	VIRGULTUM	THICKET	-	-
25.30	EDOM	RUBRUM / FULVUM	RED / TAWNY	אדם	'edōm
26.12	SAARIM	HORDEA	BARLEY	שעירים	š <sup>3</sup> ārīm
26.21	SATANAN	CONTRARIUM	ADVERSARY	שטנה	šit <sup>3</sup> -nāh
26.22	ROOBOTH	LATITUDO	WIDENESS	רחבות	r <sup>3</sup> hōbōt



27.11	SEIR	PILOSUS	HAIRY	שער	šā'ir
29.34	ILLAUE	APPLICABITUR MIHI VIR MEUS	MY HUSBAND WILL EMBRACE ME	ילוה	yillaveh
30.7	NEPTULE ELOIM NEPTALI	-	WRESTLINGS OF GOD I HAVE WRESTLED	נפתולי אלהים נפתלי	naptūlēy ēlōhīm nīptālī
30.10	BAGAD	IN EVENTU	IN THE RESULT	בגד	bāgād
30.17	SACHAR	MERCES	GOODS	שכר	šākōr
30.41/2	IAEAHAMENA	EXTREMUS IN COETU CALOR	THE HEIGHT OF COETUS / HEAT	יחמנה	yahmēnnāh
31.19	THERAFIM	IDOLA	IDOLS	תרפים	t̄rāpīm
31.46	IGAR [SYRA LINGUA] SEDUTHA	ACERVUS TESTIMONIUM	HEAP TESTIMONY	יגר שדדוּתָא	y <sup>3</sup> gar šahādūta'
32.2	MARAIM	CASTRA	CAMP	מחנים	mahānāyim
32.28	SARITH	PRINCEPS	CHIEF	שרית	šārīṭā
	EIS	VIR, (ALEPH, IOD, SIN)	MAN	[איש]	ʾīš
	RAHA	VIDENS	SEEING	[ראה]	rō'ēh
	EL	DEUS / FORTIS	GOD / STRONG	[אל]	ʾēl
33.17	SOCOTH	TABERNACULA	TABERNACLE	סכת	sukōt
34.20	SALAMIN	CONSUMMATI / PERFECTI	FINISHED / KILLED / PERFECT	שלמין	š'lemīn
31.25	BETE	AUDACTER / CONFIDENTER	BOLDLY / WITH CONFIDENCE	בטח	betah
35.8	MENECHA	NUTRIX	NURSE	מינקת	mēyneqeṭ
35.16	CHABRATHA	EPHRATA	-	כברת-	kibrat
35.18	IAMIN	DEXTERA	RIGHT HAND	בנימין	binyāmīn
	IAMIM	DIES	DAYS	[ימים]	yāmīm
38.12	RE	AMICUS	FRIEND; HIS FRIEND	רעוּה	rē'ēhū
	RO	PASTOR	SHEPHERD	ראה	rō'ēh

40.1	MASECH	PRINCEPS VINARIORUM	CHIEF OF VINEYARDS?	מִשְׁקָה	mašqeh
40.9	SARIAGIM	TRES FUNDI	THREE FARMS	שָׂרֵי דְאִפְרִים?	šar hā'ēp̄im
41.43	AB	PATER	FATHER (ABRECH)	אָבֶרְךְ	'abrēk
	RECH	DELICATUS / TENERRIMUS	FRAGILE / THIN (ABRECH)	אָבֶרְךְ	'abrēk
43.11	NECHOTA	THYMIANA	INCENSE	נִכְאָת	n'k'ā't
45.9	GESEM	IMBER	(LXX) RAIN	גֶּשֶׁם	gešem
48.2	METTA	VIRGA / LECTULUS	SPROUT / COUCH	מִטָּה	miṭṭāh
49.19	GEDUD	LATRUNCULUM	ROBBER	גִּדּוּד	g'dūd
49.21	AIALA SELUA	CERVUS EMISSUS	RELEASED DEER	אֵילָה שְׁלֹחָה	'ayah lah š'luhah
IN NAUM PROPHETAM 1.3 6	BASUPHA	IN TEMPESTATE / IN COMMOTIONE	IN STORM / WIND	בַּסּוּפָה	basūpāh
	IACCUM	RESISTET	WILL RISE	יָקוּם	yāqūm
	CHI CALLOTH	QUIA VOLUCRES	SINCE YOU TRIFLE	כִּי קָלוֹת	kī qallōt
IN ABACUC PROPH. I.1.5 2.1	RAU BAGGOIM	ASPICITE IN GENTIBUS	LOOK AMONG THE NATIONS	רְאוּ בְּגוֹיִם	r'ū baggōyim
	MASUR	MUNITIO / PETRA	DEFENSE / ROCK	מַצּוֹר	māṣōr
	ALLUOTH	TABULAE / BUXUM / PAGINAE	TABLETS / WRITING TABLETS / LEAF OF PAPER	הַלְלוּת	halluhōt
2/4	BAEMUNATHO	IN FIDE SUA	IN HIS/HER FAITH	בְּאֵמוּנָתוֹ	be'ēmūnātō
	BAEMUNATHI	IN FIDE MEA	IN MY FAITH	בְּאֵמוּנָתִי	be'ēmūnātī
	HAZON	VISUS	VISION	חֲזוֹן	hazōn
9/11	CHAPHIS	LIGNUM	BEAM	כַּפִּיט	kāpīṣ
15/17	MASPHA	SUBVERSIO	OVERTHROW	מִסְפָּח	m'sapēah
19/20	RUA	VENTUS	WIND	רוּחַ	rūah
II. 3.1	AL SEGIONOTH	IGNORATIONES	IGNORANCE	עַל־שִׁגְיוֹנוֹת	'al šigyōnōt



2	ADONAI	DOMINE	O LORD	יהוה	'ādōnāy
	PHALACH	OPUS TUUM	YOUR WORK	פעלך	pā'alāka
	BACEREB	IN MEDIO	IN THE MIDST	בקרב	b <sup>3</sup> qereb
	SANIM	ANNORUM	OF YEARS	שנים	šānīm
	HEIEU	VIVIFICA ILLUD	RENEW IT	חייו	hayyeyhū
3	SELA	IN AETERNUM / IN FINEM	FOR EVER / AT THE END	סלה	selah
5	DABAR	VERBUM	WORD	דבר	dābār
	DEBER	PESTIS	PLAGUE	דבר	deber
	RESEPH	VOLUCER	BIRD	רשף	rešep
6	GABAA	COLLIS	HILL	[גבעה]	gib'ah
10/13	SELA	IN SEMPITERNUM	FOR EVER	סלה	selah
IN SOPHONIAM 1.4/6	ACCHUMARIM	AEDITI/ FANATICI	SACRISTANS / TEMPLE PRIESTS	הכמרים	hak <sup>3</sup> mārīm
10/11	ADAGIM	PORTAM PISCUM	GATE OF FISH	הדיגים	haddāgīm
11	MACHTES	PILA	MORTAR	המכתש	hammakteš
2.3/4	ESDOD	AZOTUS / IGNIS GENERATIONIS	ASHDOD; FIRE OF CREATION	אשדוד	'ašdōd
5/7	GOI CHORETHIM	GENS PERDITORUM	PEOPLE OF DESTRUCTION; PEOPLE OF CHERETHITES	גוי כרתים	gōy k <sup>3</sup> reṭīm
	CAR	ADVENA	FOREIGNER	-	-
	GHOURETHIM	PERDITORUM	OF DESTRUCTION	-	-
12/15	HAREB	SICCITAS / GLADIUS / CORUUS	DRYNESS / SWORD / HOOK	[חרב]	hereb
3.8/9	BARURA	ELECTUM / MUNDUM	CHOSEN / CLEAN	ברורה	b <sup>3</sup> rūrāh
	LAED	IN FUTURUM / IN TESTIMONIUM	TO-COME / AS A WITNESS	לעד	lā'ēd
IN ZACHARIAM 1.2.6/9	SABAOTH	VIRTUTUM	OF HOSTS	צבאות	š <sup>3</sup> bā'ōṭ



3.10	MAPHATE PHETHEE	SCULPAM APERTURAM EIUS	ITS ENGRAVING; WILL ENGRAVE ITS INSCRIPTION	מפתח פתחה	m <sup>3</sup> pateāh piṭuhāh
4.8/10	ABDIL	MASSA, LAPIS STANNEUS	A BLOCK; STONE MADE OF STANNUM	הבדיל	hbdīl
11/14	SINTHOROTH	ROSTRA AUREA	GOLDEN BEAKS	צנורות	ṣant <sup>3</sup> rōṭ
5.1/4	ISAAR MEGELLA	SPLENDOR / OLEUS / PINGUEDO / CLARITAS CAPITULUM	BRIGHTNESS / OIL / FATNESS / SHINE CHAPTER; SCROLL	יער גלה	yīṣhār m <sup>3</sup> gillāh
5/8	ENAM ONAM	OCULI EORUM INIQUITAE EORUM	THEIR EYES THEIR WICKEDNESS	[עינים] [עונם]	‘ēynām ‘ōnām
9/11	ASIDA	UPAPA	STORK	חסידה	hāsīdāh
6.1/8	AMASIM	FORTES	STRENGTH	אמצים	‘āmuṣīm
9/15	SEMA	ORIENS	RISING; BRANCH	צמח	ṣemāh
	HOD	GLORIA	HONOUR	חוד	hōd
II.8.13/15	ULO NAAMATHI	NON SUM MISERTUS	I DID NOT RELENT	ולא נחמתי	v <sup>3</sup> lā niḥāmṭī
9.5/8	ESDOD	AZOTUS / IGNIS GENERANS	ASHDOD / CREATING FIRE	אשדוד	‘ašdōd
16	METHNOSASOTH	VAGANTES / FUGIENTES	WANDERING / FLEEING; THEY WILL SHINE	מתנוססות	miṭnōs <sup>3</sup> sōṭ
10.3/5	NOGES	FORTES / EXACTOR	STRENGTH / RULER	נוגש	nōgēš
16/17	RAAH	MALITIA	WICKEDNESS	[רעה]	rā‘āh
18/19	TOBIM	LAETAMINI	REJOICE; GOOD	חובים	tōbīm
I.2.4	IASA	STABAT	WAS STANDING	-	-
II.9.1	ADRACH	ACUTUM + MOLLE / TENERUM	SHARP + SOFT / THIN; HADRACH	חדרך	hadrāk
	MAMZER	HABITABIT / SEDEBIT	WAS LIVING / SITTING; MONGRAL PEOPLE	ממזר	mamzēr
II.9.5	BAURIM	IN FRUMENTO	IN GRAIN	-	-
II.9.17	THIROS	VINUM	WINE; NEW WINE	תירוש	tīrōš

III.10.1	AZIZIM	RORES / NIVES	DEW / SNOW; STORM CLOUDS	חזיזים	hāzizim
III.11.1	BESOR	NEMOROSUS	OF A GLADE	-	-
3	GAON	FREMITUS / SONITUS	NOISE / SOUND; JUNGLE	גאון	g <sup>3</sup> ōn
8/9	MACALOTH	BACULI	STAFFS	מקלות	maqlōt
10/11	CHEN	SIC	THUS	כן	kēn
	ANIE	PAUPERES	POOR; TRAFFICKERS OF	עניי	‘āniyēy
12/13	IOSER	FICTOR / FIGULUS	CRAFTSMAN / POTTER	יוצר	yōšer
12.5	EMSA LI	INVENIEMUS NOBIS	WE WILL FIND FOR OURSELVES; STRENGTH TO ME	אמצה לי	‘amṣāh lī
I.3.1	SANIPH MALACHI	MITRA / CIDARIS ANGELUS / NUNTIVS MEUS	HEADBAND / DIADEM ANGEL / MY MESSENGER	-	-
1.1	MASSA	ONUS / PONDUS	BURDEN / WEIGHT; ORACLE OF	משא	mal’akī massā’
6	CHABOD	HONOR	GLORY	כבוד	kābōd
2.3/4	PHARES	STERCUS / VENTRICULUM PACTUM	DUNG OF / STOMACH	פרש	perēš
3.2	BRITH	HERBA FULLONUM	AGREEMENT	ברית	b <sup>3</sup> rīt
	BORITH		SOAP	ברית	bōrīt
7	HAIECBA	SI SUPPLICAT / SI FRAUDAT	IF PRAYS / IF LIES; WILL ROB?	דיקבע	hāyiqba’
	AGGOI	GENS	PEOPLE	הגוי	haggōy
17/18	SGOLLA	PECULIUM	SPECIAL	סגולה	s <sup>3</sup> -gūllāh
	SAMAIM	CAELI	HEAVENS	שמים	šamayim
2.1	AL IUDA UIERUSALEM	CONTRA IUDAEM ET CONTRA IERUSALEM	AGAINST JUDAH AND JERUSALEM; CONCERNING~	על-יהודה וירושלם	‘al y’hūdāh vīrūsālaīm
20/21	PHARPHAROTH	VANA / INFRUCTUOSA	EMPTY / FRUITLESS; TO THE MOLES	לחפר פרות	lahpōr pērōt



22	HEDALU LACHEM MEN AADAM ASER NASAMA CHI BAMA NESAB HU	QUIESCITE ERGO AB HOMINE CUIUS SPIRITUS IN NARIBUS EIUS QUIA EXCELSUS REPUTATUS EST IPSE	TURN AWAY FROM MAN WITH BREATH IN HIS NOSTRILS FOR HE IS ESTEEMED HIGHLY; ~OF WHAT ACCOUNT IS HE?	חזלו לכם מן-האדם אשר נשמה באפו כי במה נחשב הוא	hid'āl lakem min ha'ādām 'āšer n'sāmāh b·'apō kī bammeh nehšāb hū'
II.3.4	BAMMA THALULIM	IN QUO ILLUSORES / EFFEMINATI	IN WHAT MOCKERS / WEAK MEN; BABES	במה תעלולים	bammeh ta'ālūlīm
23	ARDIDIM	FEMINAE	WOMEN; THE VEILS	הרדדים	hardīdīm
24	PHTHIGIL	FASCIA PECTORALI	GARMENT OF THE CHEST; RICH ROBE	פתויגיל	p'thīgīl
4.1	SABA	SEPTEM / IURAMENTUM	SEVEN / OATH	שבע	šebā'
5.2	BUSIM	LABRUSCAE	WILD GRAPES	באשים	b·'ušīm
10	BETH	LAGUNCULA	SMALL FLASK; DAUGHTER	בת	baṭ
III.6.6/7	MALCAIM	FORCIPES	TONGS	מלקחים	melqāḥayim
7.12	ULO ENASSE ADONAI	NON TEMPTABO DOMINUM	I WILL NOT TEST THE LORD	ולא אנסה יהוה	v·'ānasseh 'ādōnāy
14	ALAMOTH	ADOLESCENTIA / PUELLA	YOUTH / GIRL; YOUNG WOMAN	[עלמה]	'almāh
8.9/10	ROU	CONGREGAMINI	GATHER; BE BROKEN YOU	רעו	rō'ū
	DOU	SCITOTE	KNOW	[דעו]	dā'ū
9.6/7	PHELE	ADMIRABILIS	WONDERFUL	פלא	pele'
	IOES	CONSILIARIUS SEORSUM	CONSELLOR	יועץ	yō'ēš
	EL	DEUS	GOD	אל	'ēl
	EL GIBBOR	DEUS FORTIS	MIGHTY GOD	אל גבור	'ēl gibbōr
IV.10.20/23	SAR IASUB	QUOD RELIQUUM EST REVERTETUR	SINCE A REMNANT WILL RETURN	שאר ישוב	š·'ār yāšūb
28/32	BETH GALLIM	FILIA GALLIM	DAUGHTER OF GALLIM	בת גלים	baṭ gallīm

10.33/34	PHURA	TORCULAR	WINE-PRESS; BOUGHS	פֶּאֶרָה	pu'rah
11.10	CHABOD	HONOR	GLORY	כְּבוֹד	kābōd
V.PROL	MESSA	ONUS / PONDUS	BURDEN / WEIGHT; ORACLE OF	מֵשָׂא	massā'
2	NESPHE	MONS CALIGINOSUS SIVE TENEBROSUS	MISTY OR DARK MOUNTAIN; BARE	נִשְׁפָּה	nišpeh
11	THEBEL	ORBS	WORLD	תֵּבֵל	tēbēl
12	PHAZ	AURUM	GOLD; FINE GOLD	פָּז	pāz
21/22	OHIM	TYPHONIBUS	TO TYPHON	אוֹהִים	'ohīm
14.18/20	CHANESER NETHAB	QUASI SANIES POLLUTA	LIKE INFECTED BLOOD	כְּנָצַר נִתְעַב	k'-nēšer nit'ab
29	SARAPH MOPHETH	SERPENS / DRACO VOLANS	SNAKE / FLYING LIZZARD	שָׂרָף מֵעַפְפִּי	šārāp m'ōpēp
21	ARIM	CIVITATES	CITIES	עִרִים	'arīm
V.19.16/17	AGGA	FESTIVITAS	CELEBRATION	הֶגָּא	hāggā'
18	ARES	TERRA	LAND	אֶרֶץ	'ereš
23.10	IOR	RIVULUS	WADDY	יֹאֹר	y'ōr
VI.13.3	GEBORIM	NOMEN GIGANTIIUM	NAME OF GIANTS	גִּבּוֹרִים	gibbōrīm
10	CHILEEM	STELLAE	STARS	כּוֹכְבֵי	[kōk'be'y?]
11	GAON	ARROGANTIA / SUPERBIA	ARROGANCE / PRIDE	בָּאוֹן	g'ōn
12	OPHIR	AURUM	GOLD	אוֹפִיר	'ōpīr
14	SIIM	BESTIAE	BEASTS	צִיִּים	šiyīm
	OIIM	DRACONES	LIZZARDS	אוֹהִים	'ohīm
	SIRIM	PILOSOS	HAIRY	שְׂאִירִים	š'irīm
	IIM	ULULAS	OWLS	אִיִּים	'iyyīm
	THANNIM	SIRENAE	SIREN	תַּנִּיִּם	tannīm
14.2/4	GER	PROSELYTUS	PROSELYTE	גֵּר	gēr



18/19	NESER	SANIES	BLOOD	נֶסֶר	nešer
21/22 VII.17.11	ZERA MRIM ENOS	SEMEN PESSIMUM HOMO	WORST SEED MAN	זֶרַע מְרִיעִים אֵנוֹשׁ	zera' m'rē'im 'enos
19.12/15	CHAPHPHE AGMON	INCURUUM PERVERSUM	BOWED WRONG	כִּפּוּה אֶגְמוֹן	kipāh 'agmōn
21.6/7	ARIE	LEO / LEAENA	LION / LIONESS	אֲרִי	[ 'ārī]
11/12	ELAI ELI	AD ME DEUS MEUS / FORTIS MEUS	TO ME MY GOD / STRONG	אֵלַי אֵלִי	'elay 'ēlī
22.1 22.15/25	APHPHO SOCHEN	NUNC QUOQUE TABERNACULUM	NOW ALSO TABERNACLE	אֶפּוֹה סוֹכֵן	'əpə' sōlən
23.4/5	MESRAIM	TRIBULANS / COARCTANS	TROUBLING / FORCING	מִצְרִיִּם	mišrāyim
14.16	MECCHENAPH OI LI	ALA VAE MIHI	WING WOE TO ME	מִכְנָף אֵי לִי	mēkānāp 'ōy lī
21/23	SEMES HAMMA	SOL CALOR	SUN HEAT	שֶׁמֶשׁ חֶמֶה	šemeš hammāh
24.21/3 25.5	HERES BASAION	TESTA / ARIDITAS IN SITI	TILE / DRYNESS IN THE LAP/BAY	- בִּצְיִין	- b'ṣayōn
26.2/4 5/6	EMMUNIM IR CARIA	FIDES (PL) CIVITAS CIVITATULA / VICULUS / OPPIDULUM RECTITUDINES	FAITHFUL CITY TOWN / HAMLET / SMALL TOWN UPRIGHTNESS	אֲמֻנִים עִיר קִרְיָה	'ēmūnīm 'ir qiryāh
7/9 17/18	MESSARIM THEBEL	ORBS	GLOBE	מִישְׁרִיִּם תֵּבֵל	mēyšārīm tēbel
19	RAPHAIM ROPHAIM	GIGANTAS MEDICI	GIANTS DOCTORS	רַפָּאִים -	r'pā'im -

27.1	BELIAL BARI	PESTILENTIAE FUGIENS	PLAGUES FLEEING	- ברח	- bāriah
4/5	THANNIN	CETUM	WHALE	תנין	tannīn
	SAMIR	SPINAM	THORN	שמיר	šāmīr
	SAITH	VEPREM	THORN-BUSH	שית	šayīt
28.4/5	SACCHORE	EBRIOS / MERCENARIOS	INTOXICATED / BRIBED MEN	שכורי	šikōrēy
5/8	CISOA	VOMITUM SORDIUM	UNCLEAN THROWING UP	קיא צואה	qī' šō'āh
9/13	DEA	SCIENTIA	KNOWLEDGE	דעה	de'āh
	REA	MALITIA	WICKEDNESS	-	-
29.9/12	THARDEMA	GRAVEM SOMNUM	DEEP SLEEP	תרדמה	tardēmāh
30.1/5	MAOZ	FORTITUDO	STRENGTH	מעוז	mā'ōz
7	REEB	IMPETUM / SUPERBIAM	FORCE / PRIDE	רהב	rahab
32.1/8	NABAL NABALA IADABBER	FATUUS ENIM FATUA LOQUETUR	FOR THE FOOLISH WILL SPEAK FOOLISH WORDS	נבל נבלה ידבר	nābāl n <sup>3</sup> bālāh y <sup>3</sup> dabber
9/20	OPHEL	TENEBRAE	DARKNESS	עופל	'ōpel
34.8/17	BEEN	PALPATIO	FLATTERY	בון	bāhan
	SIIM	ONOCENTAURI	ASS-CENTAURS	ציים	šiyyim
	IIM	PILOSOS	HAIRY	איים	'iyyīm
38.9	DAIOTH	MILUOS / RAPACISSIMAM AVEM	KITES/ BIRDS OF PREY	דיות	dayyōt
	LILITH	LAMIA	WITCH	לילית	līlīth
	THEPHELLATH MACHTHAB	ORATIO SCRIPTURA	SPEAKING SCRIPTURE	-	-
14/15	SUS AGOR	EQUUS AGOR	HORSE OF AGOR	סוס עגור	sūs 'agūr
21/22	SIIN	ULCUS	SORE	שחין	šāḥīn



11.40.12/17	SALIS	TRES DIGITI	THREE FINGERS	שליש	שָׁלִישׁ
18/20	AMSUCHAN	LIGNUM	WOOD	המסכן	hamsukān
IN ESAIAM XII. 41.8/16	THOLATH	VERMIS	WORM	תולעת	tōla'at
43.14/15	BARIHIM	VECTES / FORTES	STRENGTH; BARS	בריהים	bārīhīm
44.6/20	SABAOTH	OMNIPOTENS	POWERFUL; OF HOSTS	צבאות	šāḇā'ōt
24/8	ROI	PASTOR MEUS	MY SHEPHERD	רעי	rō'ī
45.1/7	CHORES	CYRUS	CYRUS	כורש	kōreš
46.3/7	MEREHEM	DE UULUA	FROM THE WOMB	מני-רחם / מרחם	minnī rāham / mērāham šāmmāteḱ
47.1/3	SAMTHECH	TACITURNITATEM TUAM	YOUR VAIL	צמתך	l'ō
XIII.49.5/6	LO	NON	NOT	לא	sīnīm
8/13	SINIM	AB AUSTRO	FROM SYRENE (SOUTH)	סינים	'ēḏēn
XIV.51.1/3	EDEN	DELICIAE	DELIGHTS; EDEN	עדן	yīš'ī
4/5	IESUS	SALVATOR / SALUS	SAVIOUR / SAFETY; MY SALVATION	ישעי	tō'
19/20	THO	ILLAQUEATUM	ANTELOPE	תוא	bapūk
XV.54.11/14	BAPHPHUCH	LAPIDES TUI (אבניך ?)	YOUR STONES; IN ANTIMONY	בפורך	kadkōd
	CHODCHOD	IASPIDEM	AGATE	כדכד	'eqdah
	ECDA	CRYSTALLUM	CARBUNCLES	אקדה	hōy
55.1/2	OI	VAE	WOE	הוי	-
	NESUS	ABIES	FIR-TREE	-	-
	SARPHOD	URTICA	NETTLE	-	-
56.10/12	ROIM	PASTORES	SHEPHERDS	רעים	rō'īm
XVI.57.3/4	ONENA	INIQUITAS	WICKEDNESS; SORCERESS	עננה	'ōn <sup>3</sup> nāh



16	NASAMOTH	FLATUS	BREATH OF LIFE	נשמות	n <sup>3</sup> šamōt
58.10	MOTA	TORQUES FERREA	IRON YOKE	מוטה	mōṭah
59.5/6	EFEE	VIPERA	SNAKE	אפעה	'ep'eh
XVII.61.4/5	ELE	FORTES	STRENGTH; OAKS OF	אלי	'ēlēy
62.4	AZUBA	RELICTA	FORSAKEN	עזובה	'āzūbah
63.8/10	LO	NON	NOT	לא	l'ā
XVIII.65.8	THODA	CALOR	HEAT	-	-
65.9/10	SARON	CAMPESTRA	OF A FIELD; SHARON	שרון	šārōn
11/12	MENNI	ABSQUE ME	WITHOUT ME; DESTINY	מני	m <sup>3</sup> nī
15/16	AMEN	FIDELITER	FAITHFULLY; TRUTH	אמן	'āmēn
65.23/25	LABALA	IN MALEDICTIONE	BY WICKEDNESS; IN CALAMITY	לבהלה	labbehālah
66.10/11	ZIZ	OMNIMODUM	ALL KINDS OF; ABUNDANCE OF	זיז	zīz
18/19	MOSCHE CESETH	TENDENTES ARCUM	THOSE DRAWING A BOW	משכי-קשת	mōškey qešet
IN JEREMIAM I.13	CARATH	CLAMA / PRAEDICA	FAME / RENOWN	קראת	qārā'tā
18	CHERMEL	COGNITIO CIRCUMCISIONIS	KNOWLEDGE OF CIRCUMCISION	כרמל	karmēl
26	SIOR	TURBIDA	DISORDERED	שעור	ša'ārū
29	SOREC	VINEA FRUGIFERA	FRUIT-BEARING VINE	שרק	šōrēq
30	BORITH	HERBA FULLONUM	SOAP	ברית	bōrit
31	GE	CONVALLIS / VALLIS	ENCLOSED VALLEY / VALLEY	גא	gay'
32	RUHA	VENTUS / SPIRITUS	WIND / SPIRIT	רוח	rūah
45	ELLA	ISTA	THAT / THOSE	אלה	'elleh
48	REHIM	AMATORES (RES, AIN, IOTH, MEM)	LOVERS	רעים	rē'im
	ROHIM	PASTORES	SHEPHERDS	-	-

74	IEITHMAU	AMENTES	MADMEN	יתמרו	yītmāhū
76	RUHA	VENTUS / SPIRITUS	WIND / SPIRIT	רוח	rūah
89	SADUD	VASTATA / SOLUS	DESTROYED / ALONE	שדוד	šadūd
95	SACAD	VIGILIA	WAKING	שקד	šōqēd
	NEMER	PARDUS	MALE PANTHER	נמר	nāmēr
II.3	SABAOTH	SEPTIMANAS / PLENITUDO	SEVENFOLD / FULLNESS	-	-
9	REIM	AMATORES	LOVERS	רעים	rē'im
	ROIM	PASTORES	SHEPHERDS	-	-
12	GUBBA	CISTERNA	CISTERN	-	-
	BOR	LACUS	POOL	בור	bavir
23	CANE	CALAMUM	OF REEDS	קנה	qāneh
28	IAID	UNIGENITUM / SOLITARUM	SOLE-BORN / ALONE	יחיד	yāhīd
29	MABSAR	MUNITUM / CLAUSUM / CIRCUMDATUM	DEFENDED / CLOSED IN / SURROUNDED; FORTIFICATION	מבצר	mibšār
45	BAMATH	EXCELSA	HIGH PLACES	[במת]	bāmōt
	TOFETH	LATITUDO	WIDENESS	חופת	tōpēt
52	ASIDA	MILUUM	KITE	-	-
	SIS	CICADA	CRICKET	סס	sās
75	AGUR	CICONIA	STORK	-	-
	MACNE	SUBSTANTIA	WEALTH	-	-
82	DABAR	SERMO	SPEECH	דבר	dābār
	DEBER	MORS	DEATH	דבר	deber
	DABBER	LOQUERE	SPEAK	דבר	dabbēr
89	RUHA	SPIRITUS	SPIRIT	רוח	rūah
90	COLE	'SUPPLANTABO ET CADERE FACIAM'	I WILL TRIP AND MAKE FALL	-	-



95	THANNIM	SIRENAE	SIRENS	תַּנִּיִּם	tānīm
III.15	NEBEL	LAGUNCULA / CRATER	SMALL FLASK / BOWL	נֶבֶל	nēbāl
17	NESEPTA	LEVATE SIGNUM	RAISE THE SIGN	נִשֵּׂף?	nāšep
19	GEBIRA	DOMINATRIX / DOMINA	MISTRESS / LADY	גְּבִירָה	gʾbīrāh
51	GEBUROTH	POTENTES	POWERFUL	-	-
	SABA	SEPTEM / IURAMENTUM / PLURIMI	SEVEN / OATH / MANY	שֶׁבַע	šebʾā
55	IARE	AMICITIA	FRIENDSHIP	-	-
71	BAMOTH	EXCELSA	HIGH PLACES	בְּמוֹת	bāmōt
72	AROTHER	MYRICE	TAMARISK	-	-
74	ENOS	HOMO	MAN	אִנּוֹשׁ	ʾenōš
	ANUS	INSCRUTABILE	INSCRUTABLE	אִנּוֹשׁ	ʾanūš
81	ARMANOTH	TURRITAE DOMUS	TOWER HOUSES	אַרְמָנוֹת	ʾarmʾnōt
IV.11	BOCBOC	LAGUNCULA FIGULI	FLASK OF A POTTER	בִּקְבֵק	baqbūq
	HARSITH	FICTILIS	POTTERY	[חֲרִישִׁית]	haršitā
	CARATH	PRAEDICABIS / CLAMABIS / LEGES	YOU WILL FORETELL / WILL CALL / READ	קִרְאָת	qārāʾiā
13	GEHENNOM	VALLIS FILII ENNOM	VALLEY OF THE SONS OF ENNOM	גֵּיאַ־הַנֶּחֱמ	gayʾ hinnōm
20	MAGUR	PAVOR	FEAR	מַגּוֹר	māgōr
34	SOR	TYRUM	TYRE	צוֹר	šōr
	SUR	SILEX / COARTATAM	FLINT / FORCED TOGETHER	צוֹר	šūr
38	ARAZ	CEDRUS	CEDAR	אַרְז	ʾerez
40	MEABARIM	TRANSEUNTES	PASSERS OVER	מַעֲבָרִים	maʾābīrīm
45	SADECENU	IUSTITIA NOSTRA	OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS	צִדְקָנוּ	šidqēnū
55	BASSOD	IN CONSILIO	IN ADVICE	בַּסּוֹד	bʾsōd

62	MASSA	ONUS / PONDUS	BURDEN / WEIGHT; ORACLE OF	מִשָּׂא	massā'
V.17	US	TERRA AUSITIDIS / INSULA	LAND OF UZ / ISLAND	עֶזְ	'ūš
25	SAFUN	AQUILO	NORTH (WIND)	צִפּוֹן	šāpōn
27	BABEL	BABYLON	BABYLON	בָּבֶל	babēl
46	MUTOTH	CATENAE / FURCAE LIGNEAE	CHAINS / WOODEN FORKS	מוֹטוֹת	mōtōt
56	NEBEIM	PROPHETAE	PROPHETS	נְבִיאִים	nəbī'im
66	SUARIM	NOVISSIMAE	NEWEST	-	-
68	SINAC	IN CUSTODIAM	IN CAPTIVITY; AN IRON COLLAR	צִיֵּן	šīnōq
VI.22	SIONIM	SPECULATOIRES / SPECULAE	HOPERS / SLIGHT HOPE	-	-
	THEMRURIM	AMARITUDINES	BITTERNESSES	תְּמוֹרוֹרִים	tamrūrīm
29	SADE	REGIO	DIVISION; MY FIELD	שָׂדֵי	šādī
	MOTH	MORTIS (GEN.)	OF DEATH	מוֹת	mōt
32	DODACH	PATRUELIS TUUS	YOUR COUSIN	דָּדךְ	dōdāk
	DODI	PATRUELIS MEUS	MY COUSIN	דָּדִי	dōdī
37	GIBBOR	POTENS	MIGHTY MAN	גִּבּוֹר	gibbōr
40	BAU	VENIENT / INGREGIENTUR	THEY WILL COME / WILL ENTER	בָּאוּ	bā'ū
41	ACH	VERUMTAMEN	BUT	אָךְ	'ak
47	BAMOTH	EXCELSA	HIGH PLACES	בְּמוֹת	bāmōt

### Notes to the translation

The layout of the ancient Biblical Commentary is different from contemporary practice, and this has some bearing on the content of the writing. Firstly, the reference system for verses and chapters had not been introduced and modern conventions such as punctuation, paragraphing, and citations are lacking or inconsistent. I have arranged the work to keep it as close to the CCL<sup>\*</sup> as is possible for a number of reasons. By this means the modern reader can get an idea of how the ancient Biblical exegete worked, and any notes contributed by the translator can be kept separate in the apparatus. Different printing styles have been used to facilitate the reading of the text for the modern reader: bold type has been used throughout for the citation of the lemma, and italics where Biblical quotations are used. The ancient commentator, though, did not distinguish in script in this way. The lemma rarely consists of a whole verse, sometimes it is only a phrase or a word. Often a pericope is delineated by quoting the opening and closing phrases only. Here the older usage has been deliberately retained. All biblical references have been confined to the footnotes to allow for an easier reading line.

\* THE ENGLISH RENDERING IS MADE FROM THE REPRINT OF G. MORIN'S EDITION IN CCL Ixxii (1959) 163-245.



## EXCERPTA DE PSALTERIO

### PROLOGUE

When we were recently reading together the Psalter of Origen, which he called his *Enchiridion*, annotated with the most concise and essential explanations, we both noticed that he had only touched upon some matters briefly, or left other things completely unmentioned, about which he has written at great length in other works. This was because he presumably did not want to attempt to bring to a close such a great task in such a small work. Therefore in proportion to the friendship which is between us, you asked most eagerly and diligently that I should record with certain signs, rather than with explanations, those things which to me seem most noteworthy. And, (as those who paint the layout of countries and cities in a small chart are accustomed to do, who try to depict the widest areas in a smaller space), so I too touched upon the whole Psalter as if omitting a few things, so that from the few points that I will have touched upon, other things that have been left out will also be understood, together with the importance they bear and their significance. This is not for the reason that I believe I am able to include all those things which he has left out, but rather those comments which he has set out in his *Tomi* or in his *Homilies*, or those that I have considered suitable for reading I have recorded in this little commentary. Here ends the Prologue.

### Psalm 1

**Blessed is he who leaves the counsel of the wicked.** Some people regard this Psalm as being the preface of the Holy Spirit, and for this reason has no title. Others claim that because it has first place in its order, it must be first, and that it is redundancy (*pleonasmou*) to say that it should be placed first before any other. In other words: according to the Hebrew tradition both the first and the second psalm are one, which is also corroborated in the Acts of the Apostles. Moreover because he had begun with addressing the matter of *blessedness*, he then ends with *blessedness*, saying, **blessed are all who believe in Him.** Differently: blessed is he who has not thought, has not acted, or taught wickedness. Differently: blessed is he who is not Jew, Gentile, or heretic. Differently: Tertullian asserts in his book *On Shows* that this Psalm can be understood as being concerned with Joseph, who buried the body of the Lord, and also concerned with those who do not come to the shows of the gentiles. **And does not stand in the way of sinners.** It has not said here, 'and did not walk in the way of sinners', for this is not possible, since none is free from sin, even if his life were but one hour in length. It says that no one is without sin, but rather, 'he who did not stand in the way of sinners', that is to say, he who has not continued in his fault, but is converted to better things through penitence. **And who did not sit in the seat of the unhealthy.** Instead of 'unhealthy' the Hebrew text reads *mockers*, since clearly a wicked teacher ridicules all his pupils. And Jeremiah says concerning this: 'I have not

sat, he says, in the counsel of players.<sup>1</sup> **But his will is in the law of the Lord.** It relates two matters to three: in order that he might have delight, in order that he might join enthusiasm to delight. **And on his law he meditates day and night.** Meditation on the law is not only reading the Scriptures, but also carrying out those things that have been written. A righteous man therefore if he should eat, or drink, or sleep, doing everything in the name of the Lord, thinks on his law day and night. **He will be like a tree that has been planted by streams of water.** Instead of 'planted', Aquila has translated it as 'transplanted'. But the wood, to which the blessed man is compared, I believe, is really *wisdom*, about which Solomon speaks: 'it [sc. wisdom] is the tree of life to those who follow it'.<sup>2</sup> **And all the things he has done will flourish.** The Jews believe that this Psalm was spoken by Josiah, because he alone amongst the profane kings did not err in the counsel of the wicked, but he followed the law of God: but what has just been read, ('and all the things that he will do will flourish'), is \*A

#### Not so the wicked!

\*B is not found in the Hebrew manuscripts, and not even in the Seventy translators: for upon restudying the copies of Origen in the library of Caesarea I found it only written once. **They are as the dust that the wind blows away from the face of the earth:** nor is this even found in the old versions. **Therefore the wicked do not rise up in the judgement.** Not since they will not rise up, but since they will not rise up in judgement: for theirs has already been prejudged. **Nor sinners in the counsel of the righteous.** If the sinners do not stand up in the council of the righteous, the resurrection of sinners and of the righteous is very different. **Since the Lord knows the way of the righteous.** The Lord knows nothing else, except that which is worthy of his attention. 'Since the Lord knows those men who are his.'<sup>3</sup> And: 'If anyone does not know, he himself will be ignored'.<sup>4</sup> And to the sinners this is said: 'Leave me, evildoers, I do not know you.'<sup>5</sup> But I believe that the way of the righteous is he who says, 'I am the way'.<sup>6</sup> The prophet says of this: 'See which is the good way'.<sup>7</sup> **But the way of the wicked will perish.** How mercifully it is put: the wicked will not perish, rather wickedness itself.

<sup>11</sup> Jer. 15, 17.

<sup>2</sup> Prov. 3, 18.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Tim. 2, 19.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. 14, 38.

<sup>5</sup> Luke. 13, 27.

<sup>6</sup> John. 14, 6.

<sup>7</sup> Jerem. 6, 16.

\*A "INAPPLICABLE NOT ONLY TO JOSIAH BUT TO ANY OF THE SAINTS UNLESS PERHAPS IN THE WORLD TO COME, WE SHALL THEREFORE UNDERSTAND IT BETTER OF THE MAN WHO WAS ASSUMED AND SAVED BY OUR SAVIOUR, NOT THAT WE WILL ATTEST ONE TO HAVE ASSUMED, ANOTHER TO HAVE BEEN ASSUMED..."

\*B "THAT TEXT IN WHICH 'NOT SO' IS SAID A SECOND TIME; ALSO IT..."



## Psalm 2

**Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things?** It would be bold indeed to think that this Psalm is to be interpreted after Peter: indeed it would be bold to think something other from this verse than Peter actually said in the Acts of the Apostles. **The kings of the earth stood by.** Not just King Herod, but even those kings, whose kingdoms the Devil revealed to him in a moment of time, stood up against the Lord. **Let us break their bands asunder.** The four preceding verses are spoken by either the prophet or by angels, wondering why man's rashness has risen up against the Son of God. But from the fifth verse on the Lord himself replies, encouraging the Gentiles and all those of the Jews who will put their trust in him, to break the chains of the law and cast off the heavy burden of the law, which their fathers were not able to carry; but they should follow him, whose yoke is pleasant and whose burden is light. **He that dwells in the heavens shall laugh at them.** Through the human modes of speech we learn the disposition of God: not because he laughs at man, but because we do things worthy of derision. **The Lord shall sneer at them.** Sneering is expressed in its true sense by a furrowed brow and a wrinkled nose. Let us not suppose though that God sneers in a physical sense, a thing even in men of austerity that certain men think reprehensible. **Then shall he speak to them in his wrath.** Lactantius has written a most splendid book on the Wrath of God, and Origen has discussed this subject on many occasions: saying that it is not so much from anger as from necessity that God corrects, just as that of the father to his son, that of the doctor to his patient, that of a teacher to his pupil: but to the objects of his reproof it may seem to be anger, but it is not in anger that God corrects. **And vex them in his sore displeasure.** Just as it is written in the Epistle to the Romans, 'the anger of God is revealed'<sup>8</sup>, so that those who know anger is coming, might be able to strive to avoid it; in the same way here in his mercy he does not say, "he will punish", but he will vex them: so that when there is no punishment, he who has been vexed is thereby reproofed. **The LORD has said to me, You are my Son; this day have I begotten you.** 'Jesus Christ is yesterday, today, and forever'.<sup>9</sup> But rightly to him who was born in that time, this is said: **Ask of me, and I shall give you the heathen for your inheritance... you shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.** If a potter's vessel is broken before it has been fired into a hard pot, it can be reformed again. Read this in Jeremiah.<sup>10</sup> But once a fired pot has been broken, it is no longer possible to piece it back together. But 'those things that are impossible for men, are possible for God'.<sup>11</sup> **Learn discipline, lest he be angry.** Instead of which in Greek is said *draxasthe paideas*, (take hold of the son) in Hebrew is read NESCV BAR, which can be translated as 'worship the Son'. Therefore this is a very obvious prophecy concerning Christ, and note too the sequence of the commandment: worship the Son, lest perchance the Lord should be angry, that is the Father. **And lest you perish from the righteous way.** Since the Jews did not want to worship the Son, the Lord became angry at them and they perished from the correct way.

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<sup>9</sup> Hebr. 13, 8.

<sup>10</sup> Jer. 19, 11.

<sup>11</sup> Luke. 18, 27.

### Psalm 3

**A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son.** This Psalm is later than many that follow it, which seem to pertain to the story of Saul. This is because David suffered trickery at the hands of Saul before Absalom took up arms against him. But because it was his purpose, not so much to recount those things that he suffered, as to teach all men by the example of himself. For this reason he placed it before the earlier ones, so that it could teach the sequence in which we are tempted, since we are rebuked firstly by sins, and approved afterwards on account of our virtues. But in David the series of temptations is altered: he was innocent under the persecution of Saul, and under Absalom he was clearly guilty of the most manifest crime in killing Uriah. If you read the superscription to the fiftieth Psalm you will understand that it is prior in sequence to the third. **Many are they that rise up against me.** It is possible that this Psalm concerns both David and Christ, and through him pertains to all the Saints. **and He heard me out of his holy hill.** I believe the holy hill to be the only begotten, the Son of God, to whom the people will flock in the later days, which Isaiah and Micah prophesied.<sup>12</sup> But this phrase can also be understood as concerning the church: for it is not possible to hide a city that is built on a hill.<sup>13</sup> **I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the LORD sustained me.** As if he were asleep, and his place was persecution. **I will not be afraid of thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about.** David can also say this about Absalom's army; and the Lord about the Jews raging against him, and shouting, "Take him away, take him away, crucify him!"<sup>14</sup> **Since you hast smitten all those who oppose me without reason.** The Lord also smites the vineyards of foreigners with hail; and the Saviour, who became everything for us, is also said to be smitten by his Father. 'I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered'<sup>15</sup>. And in another place: 'Since they followed the man whom you smote'.<sup>16</sup> But where we read 'without reason' the Hebrew has 'jaw', that is LEHI; and since 'jaw' is mentioned here, it follows logically that: **you hast broken the teeth of the ungodly.** Those that favour a merely historical interpretation might say how God hits the cheek, how he breaks the teeth of sinners, in the manner of boxers fighting against each other.

### Psalm 4

**Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness.** It is incongruous to understand this Psalm as being concerned with David, since in the previous Psalm he was almost killed by his son on account of his killing Uriah, and now he dares to say: 'The God of my righteousness heard me'. The whole Psalm therefore must be seen as concerning Christ, and through Christ the righteous. Similar to these lines is

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<sup>13</sup> Matth. 5, 14.

<sup>14</sup> John. 19, 15.

<sup>15</sup> Zech. 13, 7.

<sup>16</sup> Ps. 68, 27.

what Jacob said: "my righteousness will hear me".<sup>17</sup> **You have enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.** Although you helped me, and you enlarged me when I was in distress, but I always need your mercy. **Why do you love vanity, and seek after falsehood?** **Diapsalma.** The Seventy translators, Symmachus and Theodotion have all translated the word SELA as diapsalma, but by Aquila as 'always'; but I believe that it is either the name of a musical sign, or that it indicates the continuity of those things, which have been said before; thus wherever SELA is written, we find diapsalma or 'always', so that we know that it not only pertains to the present time, but also to every time, or to the previous or following times. **What you say in your hearts upon your beds, the same you will receive.** The sinful thoughts of the day you should atone for at night through tears. **Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD.** Make a sacrifice of righteousness to God, and as a result you will trust in the Lord. **Lord, the light of your countenance is sealed over us.** The man on whose face the light of the Lord is sealed is he who meditates on the glory of the Lord face to face without a veil.<sup>18</sup> The Lord instructs us to note such a sign on the foreheads of the complainers in the Book of Ezekiel.<sup>19</sup> **They were filled with the fruit of their grain and wine.** In many manuscripts this is found: 'and their olives'. When I was reading through the old hexaplaric Psalter of Origen, which he himself had edited, I didn't find this in the Hebrew, or any other of the versions even including the Seventy translators.

### **Psalm 5**

**To the end, for her that gains her inheritance, a Psalm of David.** This Psalm concerns the church, which in the end and destruction of the world will gain its inheritance, when all nations believe in Christ. Then a prayer is given in the voice of Christ to God. **My King, and my God.** Christ is the King and God of the Church. **My voice shalt you hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I stand by you, and will look up.** After the darkness has receded from my heart, and the light of the true sun has risen, then you will hear me, then I will be able to stand by you as your servant. **The foolish shall not remain before your eyes.** Not because the wicked will not remain, and will perish in eternity, but because they will stop being wicked. **You hate, O Lord, all those who are workers of iniquity.** If he had said, those who have done wickedness, there would be no hope of repentance, and he would have hated everyone: but now he regards as hateful only those, who do wickedness, that is, those who continue in their wickedness. **You shalt destroy them that speak falsehood.** If he destroyed all who speak lies, all heretics would die, who speak lies against God: the following verse speaks of this. **The LORD will detest the bloody and deceitful man.** This is because they spread wickedness daily with the perversity of their doctrines, and they pour out their blood. This is also be understood in this way: not that they perish according to their wealth, but according to how much they

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<sup>18</sup> 2. Cor. 3, 18.

<sup>19</sup> Ezek. 9, 4.

are bloodthirsty and false. **But as for me, I will come into your house in the multitude of your mercy.** Every step we enter into the church of God is his mercy. **Lead me in your way in my sight because of mine enemies.** On account of my enemies lead me on your path, lest they lead me off course. **Their heart is empty; their throat is an open sepulchre.** Understand this to concern heretics and teachers of false doctrines, whose words are deathly and kill the innocent. **Judge you them, O God.** If according to the first Psalm the wicked do not rise in judgement, then this demands on account of heretics, so that they might be corrected through the judgement of God. **Let them fall by their own counsels.** Just what he demanded above: that he judge them, and that they desist at last from their perverse teachings. **Cast them out according to the multitude of their transgressions.** He has not said however from where they are to be expelled, but the sequence and reading of the text leads us to understand it in this way: cast them out from their transgressions; or in this way: cast them out from the land of your heredity, which the church will obtain, and even the title anticipates this. But they are cast out from the land of heredity, if they have a multitude of transgressions. **LORD, you have compassed us with your favour, as with a shield.** We are protected by a shield: and when we have been protected we will be compassed.

#### Psalm 6

**To the end, for the eighth, A Psalm of David.** This Psalm and the eleventh have the superscription 'for the eighth', containing the mystery of the resurrection and repentance, and through this our salvation. And in this Psalm the human race demands that certain of us should be corrected, and be judged by God, but not in his anger and wrath. It would be tedious to recall the many examples of this number in the Bible. Eight souls entered into Noah's ark, which were saved in the flood. David was the eighth son of Jesse, who despaired of his father and alone was chosen by God. On the eighth day the first born are circumcised, and they are no longer unclean. Zachariah also, the father of John, spoke on the circumcision of his son on the eighth day. And after eight days, or six (for both are read in different gospels) the Lord was transformed on the mountain: in this way the eighth is contained in the sixth number, just as now in the sixth Psalm the superscription is written 'ogdoadis'<sup>20</sup>. **O LORD, rebuke me not in your anger, neither chasten me in your anger.** This is a Psalm of repentance, and the psalmist does not refuse the rebuke or correction, but only if it is in wrath or in anger: since he is weak and his bones have been vexed. **But you, O LORD, how long?** The subtext is: how long will you not rescue, chastise, and correct my spirit which has been greatly vexed. **Turn again, O LORD, deliver my soul.** Unless he first converts again our soul, he is not able to deliver it from danger. Differently: Lord, since you have averted your visage from me, turn back, deign to look upon us, and deliver our soul. **For in death there is no man mindful of you.** For the dead will not praise the Lord, but only we that are living: since he is not a God of the dead, but of the living. **In hell who will confess to you?** By confession is meant praise. As far as the fact that he says this: who will remember you? He is not saying that this never happens though, but that it seldom will. For a saint delights in all judgements of God, and praises his judgements. **I laboured in my groaning.** Pity me: since I have done this and all this that follows. **All the night make I my bed wash.** He who makes his bed to swim



daily with his tears, is not able in his thoughts to escape the pomp of his lust. **I water my couch with my tears.** There is such a quantity of tears, that his bed becomes moist with the tears. **Mine eye is vexed by anger.** Where are the followers of the literal interpretation? That bodily eye is not truly vexed by anger, unless by chance we are aroused to such a rage that our face, nostrils and mouth are changed. That eye will certainly be vexed, which will be torn out if it is sinful. But he does not say, my eye has been vexed by my anger: but O God, because of whose anger I fear the punishments prepared for me, my mind is vexed, and all of my heart trembles as one. **I have become old because of all mine enemies.** My enemies do not wage a new war against me: my foe is an old one. Alternatively: I am not able to attain the full stature of the man who is renewed from day to day, since I carry an old man with his vices and desires, my enemies fighting against me. **Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity.** After he himself attains mercy, he tells or urges others to leave him: for he does not want to have any acquaintance with the wicked. At the same time what we have just said must also be remembered, that he orders to leave him not those who have done wickedness, but those who continue to do wickedness. **Let them repent and be greatly ashamed suddenly.** He prays not against his enemies but for his enemies, that they should be converted and that they might be greatly ashamed of their sins: and that they might be ashamed not just lightly, but with intensity: not at some point in the future, but immediately.

### **Psalm 7**

**Psalm of David, which he sang to the LORD, concerning the words of Cush the Benjamite.** There are many who believe, especially those who do not know the Hebrew language, that this Psalm was sung at the time when David, the friend of Achish, the son of Gath, destroyed the council of Achish, and sent messengers to him telling him not to remain in the desert any longer, and to flee far away, so as not to be crushed by his son. But it must be known that this is quite wrong. Firstly, because the name Cush is written with a SAMECH, but here it is a SIN. Then because David, who had commanded Joab and the other leaders of his army, saying 'spare my son Absalom', would never speak about the death of his son, 'he conceived pain, and gave birth to iniquity: he opened a hole and dug it out, and he fell into the hole which he had dug'<sup>21</sup>: then certainly he who covered his head when he heard of his son's death, and wailing cried out, 'Absalom my son, Absalom my son'. Finally, Cush, the friend of David, is called the son of Achish, but here he is called the son of the Benjamite. It must be understood, therefore, that Cush is interpreted as Ethiopian, and thus the whole Psalm is written against Saul: for he was persecuting him, and he fell into the hole that he himself had dug. He calls him Ethiopian on account of his bloody, foul and cruel ways. But Books of Kings are a witness to the tribe of the Yemenites, as to the fact that it pertains to the tribe of Benjamin, from which Saul was born, about which the Scripture says, 'now there was a man of the sons of Benjamin, and his name was Kish, the son of Abiel, the son of Saret, the son of Becora, the son of Afi, the son of the Yemenite, a

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<sup>21</sup> 2 Sam 18, 5.

powerful man: and he had a son, and his name was Saul'.<sup>22</sup> Shimei too, who threw stones and dust at David, was of the family of Saul, that is he was Yemenite, just as it is written in the same books: 'A man came out from the house of Saul, and his name was Shimei, the son of Gera'.<sup>23</sup>

David then later speaks of him, saying, 'Behold, my son, which came forth of my bowels, seeks my life: how much more now may this Benjamite do it?'<sup>24</sup> Aquila has translated this passage in this way: 'Because of David's ignorance, since he sang to the Lord on account of the words of the Ethiopian'. Symmachus in this way: 'For David's ignorance, because he sang to the Lord concerning the words of Cushi the son of the Yemenite'. I have reproduced all these translations in detail, since the most erudite of men consider this Psalm not to be written against Saul, but against Absalon: which, to the best of my ability, I have shown it not to be. **If I have returned the same to those doing wickedness to me.** Twice Saul was handed over into his hands, whom he refused to kill, saying, 'Let me not touch the Lord's anointed.' That is he will not pay back wickedness with wickedness, to him who having received wickedness, returned goodness. **I will fall justly from my enemies without cause.** For 'without cause' in the Hebrew RACHA is written, by which we understand that which is written in the gospel: 'whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, and Fool', and the translation it has there. **God tries the hearts and reins. My defence is righteous.** In Hebrew this is written: 'Examining the hearts and the reins is the righteous God': so that next this phrase follows on, 'my aid is from God, who saves the righteous of heart'. **Why is he angry every day?** This is written better in the Hebrew text: 'he threatens every day', which is also what Aquila has translated. He puts it most elegantly, saying, 'threatening and gnashing every day'. For he does not punish for offences in this way on account of his forbearance, as if he is awaiting the day of vengeance with anger and threats, that he might correct wrong-doers through fear. **If you do not turn, he will brandish his sword.** Beware, o sinner, when you hear that the Lord is thus ready to punish. **He has made ready his arrows for those about to burn.** The arrows of God are being prepared for those who are about to burn.

### Psalm 8

**In the end concerning the presses.** Three Psalms of different men are inscribed 'concerning the presses': for David, for Asaph, for the sons of Chore; and since they all pertain to the sacraments of the church, they are placed accordingly in eighth and eightieth position. But because the eighty-third is the last Psalm that is ascribed to the presses, this shows that the sacrament of the resurrection and the church is contained in the trinity. **O LORD our Lord.** The first name of the Lord for the Hebrews has four letters - ioh, he, uau, he: this word is the very name of God, and it can be read as Iahoh, and the Hebrews consider it to be *arreton*, that is unspeakable. But more common is the Hebrew term Adonai, which is used regarding mankind. **Since I will consider the heavens, the work of your fingers.** He who promises that he will look up, yet does not look in the present moment. 'I will look', he says: for then I will indeed know the reasoning of his work and process. The helmsman watches his ship, the

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<sup>23</sup> 2 Sam. 16, 5.

<sup>24</sup> " Sam. 16, 11.

doctor his patient, or a painter his picture very differently to the untaught eyes of the unskilled. **For you hast made him a little lower than the angels.** In Hebrew where it says, 'than the angels', which is said MALACHIM, it reads 'God', that is ELOIM. The apostle interprets this passage in the letter to the Hebrews as referring to Christ.<sup>25</sup> **He who passes through the paths of the seas.** The saints, which are sometimes called 'fish' by *tropology*, do not remain in the sea, but pass through the paths of the seas.

### **Psalm 9**

**In the end concerning the secrets of the son.** Although Aquila has translated 'youth of the son' instead of 'secrets of the son', it must be known that the Hebrew reads 'concerning the death of the son'. Then Symmachus has translated it in this way: 'concerning the victory from the death of the son'. The whole Psalm therefore pertains to the sacrament of Christ through *tropology*. The Seventy translators too wanted to hide the suffering and resurrection of Christ, which was previously unknown to the world, by the word 'secrets', so that it might not be understood easily by the gentiles at that time. **He has prepared his seat for judgement.** 'For the Father has given every judgement to his Son'.<sup>26</sup> **A helper in times in distress.** The meaning is the same as in another Psalm: 'I called to the Lord when I was in trouble, and he heard me'.<sup>27</sup> **Declare among the people his doings.** Instead of 'his doings' in Hebrew it reads 'his changes': so that it then means more accurately his warning against the peoples, according to the word of the Lord, which says, 'the rule will be removed from you, and will be given to the people producing his fruit'.<sup>28</sup> **A song of 'diapsalma'.** This verse also shows that the 'diapsalma' is not silent: in no way can a song be considered silent. **That the nations may know since they are men:** who are now living like animals. **He will rule over all his adversaries.** 'None is without sin, even if his life be but one day long'<sup>29</sup>; and granted that a man may become a saint later, at one time, though, he was ruled by the devil. Alternatively: no one is as much an enemy of the devil, as he who is a sinner: while the devil will also be punished afterwards on account of his sins. The righteous man is in fact a friend of the devil: and on account of that righteous man the devil will not be punished. Alternatively: when we are baptised, renouncing the devil and his pomp, we also make a pact with him, and enter into such a friendship with him, that he neither touches us, nor do we have contact with those things which are anything to do with him. As long as we keep an agreement of this kind, the devil will not rule us: but if the agreement is broken and we slip into vice, the devil will rule us as our enemies and accusers. **He will lay ambush with the wealthy.** We can utilise this verse most elegantly, if persecution is stirred up against Christians from the ruling of a council. **The righteous is released**

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<sup>26</sup> John. 5, 22.

<sup>27</sup> Psalm 119, 1.

<sup>28</sup> Matth. 21, 43.

<sup>29</sup> Job. acc. to LXX 14, 4-5.



from you. That is, either he must be raised up by the help of God alone, or he is left to your injustice, if he is ever afflicted by troubles.

#### **Psalm 10** [11]

**Fly across to the mountains as a bird.** He desires the righteous to fly to the ungodly, so that he might there crush him more easily. **That they may shoot in darkness at the upright in heart.** For they never fight in the daylight, but always in the darkness. The righteous said concerning this, 'A lantern for my feet is your word, Lord.'<sup>30</sup> **What did the righteous do?** That is: he has done nothing so bad, that he deserves death.

#### **Psalm 11** [12]

**With deceitful lips and with a double heart they have spoken.** Symmachus has translated it this way: 'a slippery tongue: there is one thing in his heart, and he speaks another'. **The wicked walk in the orbits.** When he has transferred us from the present time to the future, then the wicked will walk outside: they will not be able to enter with the saints, whom you have preserved by your concern according to your greatness.

#### **Psalm 13** [14]

There is no superscription. **The fool has said in his heart.** Instead of the word 'fool', the Hebrew has NABAL. This is what Abigail says about her husband Nabal on Mount Carmel: 'in truth according to his name he is a fool'.<sup>31</sup> **There is none that does good, not even one.** Some regard this Psalm as being concerned with the suffering of Christ, when all forsook the Lord: such that even Peter, who was the first of the apostles, denied him. **Their mouth is as an open tomb.** The Hebrew manuscripts do not contain the text from this verse until the one which says: 'there is no fear of God in the sight of their eyes'. Some have asked therefore how the apostle has used it as testimony in the Epistle to the Romans.<sup>32</sup> I will answer that the apostle wove together this testimony from Deuteronomy, the Psalms, and other Scriptural verses. **There they feared with great fear.** Here the phrase that follows, 'where there was no fear', does not occur in the Hebrew scrolls.

#### **Psalm 14** [15]

**Nor takes up a reproach against his neighbours.** He is never accused by his neighbours as if he were guilty. **But he honours them that fear the LORD.** He does not honour the rich, nor the powerful: but only those who fear the Lord.

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<sup>31</sup> 1 Sam. 25, 25.

<sup>32</sup> Rom. 3, 13.

### **Psalm 15** [16]

**On the title superscription of David.** 'Title superscription' is more appropriate on burial chambers and tombs, and structures that house the bodies of the dead. Instead of this Aquila and Symmachus here have written 'lowly and straightforward' and 'lowly and unblemished'; what they mean is that the Psalm more rightly concerns Christ, when he says: 'learn from me, since I am lowly and gentle'.<sup>34</sup> **Since you do not need my good deeds.** We read the same lines written in the Book of Job: 'Of what gain is it to the Lord, if you make your way perfect?'<sup>34</sup>. All good things therefore, which the Lord has shown according to the appearance of a servant in the flesh, are of no gain to the Father, but only to the human race. **Their weaknesses have been multiplied, afterwards they will hasten.** The nations, from which I now gather the congregation, knew God naturally before their idols were multiplied; but after the multiplication of their idols, (which the Seventy translators have translated as 'weaknesses'), they forsook them and turned back to me as quickly as possible. **I will not gather their drink offerings of blood.** The spiritual practice of the New Testament. **Nor will I be mindful of their names into my lips.** That it, we are changed by baptism, and we are called not 'the sons of men' but 'the sons of God'. **You are he who will return my inheritance to me.** This is what is said in the gospel: 'No one comes to me, unless my Father has led them to me'.<sup>35</sup> **The lines are fallen to me in the best places.** I have pursued the heredity of the whole world, instead of the one nation of Israel. **I will bless the LORD, who has given me understanding.** He who is the wisdom of God, does not need wisdom itself; but according to that which is written in the gospel: 'Jesus was advanced in age, wisdom and grace before God and before men'. **My reins also instruct me in the night.** By night is to be understood the time of the *Passion*: in which he has been taught by God in his heart not to put his trust in the frailty of mankind. **Therefore my heart is glad.** I am rejoicing because of the resurrection, since through this the world has been freed.

### **Psalm 16** [17]

**You have proved mine heart; you have visited in the night.** You proved me even in the direst of times, which are sad and as certain burdens are darkest at night. **By the word of your lips I have kept the hard paths.** Fearing future punishments, with which you threatened law-breakers, I exerted myself in hard work and subordinated my body to the might of the mind. **Deliver my soul from the wicked, your sword from the enemies of your hand.** The sequence is this: deliver the sword of your hand from your enemies. For an enemy takes control, so that he might punish us for our sins; and the apostle

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<sup>34</sup> Job. 22, 3.

<sup>35</sup> John. 6, 44.

says, 'I handed them over to Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme'.<sup>36</sup> **They are full of children, and have left the rest of their substance to their babes.** Because of the ambiguity of the word, certain men believe that 'pig' is written instead of 'sons'. Symmachus has translated this, expressing the Hebrew truth, as 'the sons will be satiated, and they will leave their trace in their children'.

#### **Psalm 17 [18]**

**I will love you, O LORD, my strength.** The whole of this Psalm pertains to Christ through the voice of David. **He bowed the heavens also, and came down.** This is the same as is written in another Psalm, 'he will come down just as the rain in the clouds'<sup>37</sup>, since he showed himself to us to be lowly and, disguised in the appearance of a servant, hiding. **And darkness was under his feet.** This means the unseen wealth of God and the hidden judgements, which he shows more openly in the following verses, saying, **He made darkness his secret place, and the foundations of the world were discovered.** Certain men would like to see this as concerning the day of suffering: when the rocks will be split and the dead resurrected. **And I might be guarded from my iniquity.** Since according to the apostle goodness does not live in our body, and from youth the mind of man adheres assiduously to evils. **For who is God save the LORD?** He elegantly describes both the Father and the Son in this one phrase. For God alone is the Father, from whom come all things; the same Lord is Jesus, through whom all things come. **And your discipline has reproved me completely.** 'For the Lord corrects the one he loves.'<sup>38</sup> We are raised up therefore, who formerly collapsed, when we are cut down by the Lord. **Deliver me from the opponents of the people.** It is possible that this is spoken against heretics and also against Jews. **The sons of strangers have deceived me.** Isaiah himself says the same: 'Woe, sinful nation, strangers, people filled with sins'.<sup>39</sup>

#### **Psalm 18 [19]**

**The skies tell of the glory of God.** The creator is known consequently as a result of his creations. Differently: the skies tell of the glory of God, the earth is not able to tell it. **Day to day utters speech, and night to night shows knowledge.** He has related equal things to other equals: since through the ordered sequence we arrive at a greater understanding of God. **In the sun he set his tabernacle.** In the Hebrew this reads: 'a tabernacle for the sun he set in them', that is, God has set it in the heavens. **And he rejoiced as a giant to run a race.** This is understood as concerning Christ through the mystic symbol of the sun. **And there is none who hides from his heat.** For there is none who does not have the seeds of the understanding of God. **The law of the LORD is perfect, converting souls.** He who

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<sup>37</sup> Ps. 71, 6.

<sup>38</sup> Prov. 3, 12.

<sup>39</sup> Is. 1, 4.

<sup>40</sup> Philipp. 4, 1.

before had praised God through his creations, now begins to proclaim him through the giving of law. **Who understands his errors?** This is the third division of praise, by which he teaches that what was impossible under the Law, (because it was through self-deceit that sin appeared in the world), was fulfilled by the grace of the Gospel: and he teaches that it is not possible for someone to be freed from the squalor of his thoughts, except by the coming of the Holy Spirit.

#### **Psalm 19** [20]

**Let the LORD hear you in the day of trouble.** Some men believe that this Psalm was spoken by a people speaking to Christ, as if speaking both to a king and a priest. **Let him send you help from the sanctuary.** Probably it is right to seek help as if from a human form, from him who took on the form of a slave. **Let Him remember all your offerings.** The sacrifice is that of Christ, which we all offer to him in prayer, or he himself poured out all his blood for the sake of all men. And the meaning is: do not allow the death of any man, when you have died for all men. **Let him fulfil all your desire.** 'Father, I would that just as you and me are one, so let those men be in us as one'. **Some trust in chariots, and some in horses.** Horses and chariots are always used in relation to Egypt. Let some trust in idols and demons, but let us put our faith in Christ. **LORD, save the king, and hear us in whatever day we call you.** In Hebrew this is written in this way: 'Lord, save your king, who will hear us in whichever day we will call upon him.

#### **Psalm 20** [21]

**O LORD, the king shall rejoice in your strength.** That is the king, (from whom salvation is requested in the appearance of a servant, as it is written in the previous Psalm): Christ is 'king of kings and lord of rulers'. **And in your salvation he will rejoice greatly.** That is: because you have saved mankind, your Son, who is the Saviour, will rejoice. **You have given him his heart's desire, and have not withheld the desire of his lips from him.** But indeed we are not servants, but friends: what he sought has been fulfilled: just as Christ and the Father are as one, so too we are one in him. **You have set a crown of precious stones on his head.** The crown of the Lord is the gathering of the church from diverse peoples, about which Paul, speaking in the voice of the believers, says, 'my joy and my crown'.<sup>40</sup> **He asked life, and you gave it to him.** As a man he died, and as a man he rose again: since a God could not demand life. **The length of days for ever and ever.** Let the Synagogue of the wicked be silent. What man lives through the ages, or even for ever? Even David and Solomon reigned not much more than forty years. **His glory is great in your saviour.** That which he himself asked in the gospel is here fulfilled: 'Father, glorify me in your presence'.<sup>41</sup> **You will make him exceedingly glad with your countenance.** This means: he will always be with you in heaven. **For the king trusts in the LORD.** According to the physical dispensation. **Your right hand shall find out those that hate you.** The Lord has very great mercy, as he even wanted to find out his enemies. **O LORD, you will disturb them in your wrath.** Here also the mercy of God does not punish men, but disturbs them so that they are converted to repentance. **And the fire shall devour them.** This is the fire, about which

the Lord says in the gospel, 'I have come to send fire upon the earth, and how I wish it were set on fire'.<sup>42</sup> Two men also were speaking about this fire, to whom the Saviour appeared in the scriptures whilst on a journey, and they said, 'surely our hearts were on fire along the way, when he opened up for us the scriptures?'.<sup>43</sup> **You will prepare weapons against those left behind you, against their face.** Instead of 'left behind' in Hebrew is written, 'against the good men'. The meaning can then be understood: you will make those who are cleansed by torments in the likeness of the saints, whom you have saved from out of the whole earth, so that the faces of sinners begin to be like the faces of saints. That is, so that those who used to be sinners have become just like those who are saints.

### **Psalm 21** [22]

**In the end to the morning assumption.** The morning assumption signifies the mystical symbol of the Lord's resurrection and the ascension to the Father. But the Hebrews have the teaching in a different form: 'concerning the morning deer'. They interpret the whole twenty-first psalm, perversely thinking it was written about Esther, on the grounds that it was by her pleading with the king, at her own peril, that the people of Israel were delivered from their peril. But we understand that deer, which kills snakes and drinks their poison, to be none other than Christ himself, as the language of the psalm as a whole reveals. **God, my God, why have you forsaken me?** The Lord used this verse while he was hanging on the cross; and from this fact we notice that in fact the whole Psalm is sung down from the cross by the Lord. But where it has in the middle, 'turn to me', this is not found in the Hebrew manuscripts; our Lord's utterance in the Gospel, which also uses this phrase, makes it clear that this is an interpretation. **So far from my salvation, and from the words of my sins?** Aquila has translated this passage in this way: 'so far from my salvation, and from the words of my roarings'. Symmachus has this: 'words of my moanings'. In the Fifth and Sixth editions: 'words of my cries'. And this is the meaning according to the other translators: my groanings and strivings, by which I have always sought to save the people of Israel, have been far removed from my salvation, which I want to give to the people, since they themselves did not want to receive healing. But according to the Seventy translators the meaning is this: As for the fact that I bewail my salvation and lament that I am abandoned, I am not speaking this in the persona of myself, but in the persona of the people, whose sins I have taken into in my body. Therefore I say: those words, which I am pouring forth, are far from my salvation. For I, who am God, do not ask for salvation so much for myself, as for the people that need it. **I cry in the daytime, but you hear not; and in the night, but not in foolishness for myself.** When hanging during the day the Father did not hear him; by night the conqueror rose up from hell. Alternatively: he who is not heard when he is happy, is heard when in tears. Then he says: I did not cry out in my stupidity, that is, I did not cry out in vain. And Aquila has translated from the Hebrew, saying, 'and at night, you will not be silent'; that is, you will hear me, reply to me, you will do what I have begged you. **But I am a worm, and no man.** He says this on account of the lowliness of the body that he has

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<sup>42</sup> Luke. 12, 49.

<sup>43</sup> Luke. 24, 32.



assumed, and Isaiah says the same too: 'do not fear, o worm Jacob'.<sup>44</sup> **A reproach of men.** What is more of a reproach than the cross? **And contempt of the people.** The derision of Jewish people. **Rich bulls have beset me round.** Instead of 'rich' Symmachus has translated 'fat'. In the Hebrew the word BASAN is written, which can be translated as 'disgrace'. **For many dogs have compassed me.** Instead of dogs, the Hebrew text has CALABIN, which both Aquila and Theodotion have translated as 'hunters'.

#### **Psalm 22** [23]

**The LORD gratifies me; I shall not want.** Ezekiel too speaks of this shepherd: 'I will set up a shepherd, and he will feed them, my servant David'.<sup>45</sup> **Your rod and your staff they comfort me.** 'For the Lord corrects him whom he loves'.<sup>46</sup>

#### **Psalm 23** [24]

**Lift up your gates, O chiefs.** Instead of which the Hebrew has: 'raise up, o gates, your heads'. **The LORD of virtues, he is the King of glory.** Instead of Lord of virtues, the Hebrew reads, 'the Lord of Sabaoth': which in another place the Seventy translators have translated as 'omnipotent'.

#### **Psalm 24** [25]

**Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my ignorance.** Both age and his ignorance are his excuse, by which we can understand that he, who sins in youth, and is not ignorant, will not be pardoned. 'For even a servant, who knows the will of his master, and does not do it, will be severely beaten'.<sup>47</sup> **All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth.** Since mercy itself is balanced with equal weights. **For I am an only son and a pauper.** In this way Elija dwelt alone, and Jeremiah sat and wept alone, removed from all evils. In another place David says: 'God makes men live as one in a house'. **And they hate me with unjust hatred.** An unjust hatred is said to distinguish it from a just one.

#### **Psalm 25** [26]

**Burn my reins and my heart.** Where 'reins' is written, is meant 'in the heart'. **Since your mercy is in the sight of mine eyes.** He seeks judgement in this way, so that he will remember his mercy. **I will wash mine hands among the innocent.** I will wash with good works my hands, which previously had

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<sup>45</sup> Ezek. 34, 23.

<sup>46</sup> Prov. 3, 12.

<sup>47</sup> Luke. 12, 47.

been dirtied by sins. **And their right hand is full of bribes.** He teaches us that we must abstain from gifts, accusing those in particular who accept bribes.

#### **Psalm 26** [27]

**To David before he was anointed.** David was anointed three times: firstly in Bethlehem under his father Jesse; secondly in Hebron; thirdly when he ruled over all Israel. We must ask therefore which anointing this Psalm most properly refers to. But it must also be known that in the Hebrew manuscripts the phrase 'before David was anointed' does not occur. **One thing have I asked of the LORD.** Some think that this is speaking about one mercy, one grace, or even one request, because the Hebrew word ZOTH means one thing in the neuter form, and it should be read: 'one thing I have sought from the Lord, this I will seek'. **Since my father and my mother have forsaken me.** This can be simply understood as referring to David, because as the youngest he was despised by his brothers and by his parents, and was chosen by the Lord through Samuel. But more generally the love of parents towards their children ends with death; the love of God though grows with time. **For wickedness lies to itself.** Since false witnesses lie against others, they also lie to themselves, for they prepare their own punishments, thinking that God will not punish their lies.

#### **Psalm 27** [28]

**And I will become like them that go down into the pit.** The pit means hell, that is, the place for those who are held captive. In another place this is also written: 'into captivity, which was in the pool'.<sup>48</sup> **Give them according to their deeds.** Since they do not understand you by your good deeds, let them know you by their punishments. **And my flesh greatly rejoiced.** Instead of flesh, Theodotion has translated 'heart'. Alternatively: we have risen up to Christ, and it is said about the resurrection: 'Your bones will rise up as grass'.<sup>49</sup> **And he is protector of the welfare of his Christ.** Whosoever is baptised into Christ, even he then is called Christ. But you must know, that this Psalm, excepting one letter, is written in the Hebrew manuscripts according to the sequence of the letters<sup>50</sup>.

#### **Psalm 28** [29]

**The voice of the LORD is upon the waters.** These are the waters which praise the Lord in heaven. 'The voice of one shouting out in the desert'.<sup>51</sup> **The God of glory thundered.** 'This is my son, beloved of me, who pleases me'.<sup>52</sup> **The LORD is upon many waters.** Christ the Lord himself receives his baptism along with many men. **The voice of the LORD is powerful.** 'Produce fruit worthy of

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<sup>49</sup> Is. 66, 14.<sup>50</sup> i.e. 'alphabetical order'.

<sup>51</sup> Matth. 3, 3.

<sup>52</sup> Matth. 3, 17.

penitence'.<sup>53</sup> **The voice of the LORD in majesty.** 'Let it be so now, for it is fitting for us to fulfil all righteousness'.<sup>54</sup> **The voice of the LORD breaking the cedars.** All proud men. 'Behold the axe is placed upon the roots of the trees'.<sup>55</sup> **He will crush them also as a bullock of Lebanon.** Striking their branches and the thicket with his feet. Instead of this the Hebrew has: 'and the bullock of Lebanon'. **The voice of the LORD dividing the flame of fire.** When John speaks about the penitence in the wilderness, he quenched all *the burning of Gehenna*. **The voice of the LORD shaking the wilderness.** The soul, which was made into a wilderness by the vices previously occupying it, is moved to words of repentance, so that when they leave it, it becomes fit to be inhabited by God. **The LORD sits upon the flood.** God does not inhabit the dry land. At the same time, notice the force of the word, since he did not say waters, but flood: this is so that he has shown the abundance of spiritual grace.

### **Psalm 29** [30]

**A Psalm of song at the dedication of the house of David.** The dedication of the house of David, is understood to be the resurrection of the Saviour, in which all bodies are dedicated to life. **Weeping will endure until the evening, but happiness comes in the morning.** This can be understood as concerning both the time of suffering, and also the resurrection and the end of the world.

### **Psalm 30** [31]

**Be my protector, O God.** Here Symmachus has translated 'the hardest rock'. **And a fear to mine acquaintances.** Since my friends have gone far away from me for fear of my enemies. According to the historical view the whole Psalm can be understood to concern David, and according to the prophetic view, to concern the Lord. **Hide them in the secret of your face** and so on. This is likewise understood as concerning both David and the Lord: since God guarded David from Saul and Absalon, and protected the Lord from the Pharisees and the Jews. **Since the Lord seeks truth.** Aquila here has: 'Since the Lord preserves the faithful'.

### **Psalm 31** [32]

**When the thorn sticks into me.** The pricks of conscience and of sin. **But in the floods of great waters they shall not come near to him.** Without troubles, he says, which are compared to flood waters, the saints are not able to come near to God. Since 'he who has held on until the end, the same will be saved'.<sup>56</sup> **I will make you understand and teach you the way which you will go.** The voice of the Lord speaking is introduced, and telling how mankind should deserve his help: for if he keeps the

<sup>54</sup> Matth. 3, 15.

<sup>55</sup> Matth. 3, 10.

<sup>56</sup> Mark. 13, 13.

precepts of God he will be drawn along the righteous path, and although he will not be able to attain the highest pinnacle of purity, he will not be drawn headlong into vice like an animal.

### **Psalm 32** [33]

**By the word of the LORD were the heavens made and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.** This is clearly talking about the Trinity: The Lord, the Word, and the (life-breathing) Spirit of the Lord. **Gathering the waters of the sea together as in a wineskin.** He shows the sea closed in by the shores. **He fashioned their hearts.** Some people use this verse falsely to support their claim: they believe that one soul is formed from another soul, and that the souls of all were contained in Adam: since that which is written in the Greek '*kata monas*', means not one, but each one through many.

### **Psalm 33** [34]

**A Psalm of David, when he changed his behaviour before Abimelech, and he drove him away, and he departed.** The change in his appearance is shown by the change in the words, when he pretended to have been sent by Saul. But if we want to understand the true change of his face, we must remember that Abimelech has been written here instead of Anchus. And nor is it a mistake in the name, for he was able to be called Abimelech because he was born of a father who was a king: as Abimelech can be translated as being 'my father is a King'. **Seek peace, and pursue it.** It is not enough to flee from wickedness, unless you also actively do good as well. **The LORD is close to them that are afflicted.** Close not in position, but in help. **Many are the afflictions of the righteous .** Therefore he, who does not suffer an affliction, is not righteous. **The death of sinners is worst of all.** The trials of the righteous end with death: but sinners begin their punishment only after they die.

### **Psalm 34** [35]

**But as for me, when my friends were afflicted, I put on sackcloth.** These are the weapons of the saints. But the whole of the Psalm is in the voice of Christ, and through Christ it can be related to all the saints. **As though he had been our friend or brother.** If we see the Psalm as being in the voice of David, then we understand the friend as being Saul; but if in the voice of Christ, the friend is Judas the betrayer. **The scourges gathered themselves together against me, and I knew it not.** We may ask what this is that he did not know. Some believe that it is the pain of wounds which he suffered on the cross. But it is better understood as relating to sins: since he was not aware of any sins, for which he was crucified. **Since some speak smooth words to me.** 'Teacher, shall we pay tribute to Caesar or not?'<sup>57</sup> **Yea, they opened their mouth wide against me.** Not only did they sin against me, but also insulted me, saying, 'if he is the Son of God, let him come down, and we will believe in him'.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Matth. 27, 40, 42.

<sup>59</sup> Matth. 13, 43.

<sup>60</sup> Luke. 6, 25.

<sup>61</sup> Ps. 68, 6.

### **Psalm 35** [36]

**The wicked said, that he should have deliction.** That is, he has decided that he must sin. **And your faithfulness reaches to the clouds.** Those who do not want to understand the scriptures in a spiritual way, explain how the truth of God reaches to the clouds. **You preserve man and beast, O LORD.** The rational creatures and irrational alike. **In your light shall we see light.** The light of the Father is Christ: in Christ, the light of the Father, we will see the light that is the Holy Spirit. **They were cast down, and were not be able to rise.** Cain was also cast down from the presence of God: and since he was not in the presence of the Lord, he lived in the land of Nod, which is translated *salos*, that is fluctuation or movement. He was cast out, and was not able to rise.

### **Psalm 36** [37]

**And your judgement as the noon.** For then 'the righteous will shine out as the sun in the realm of their Father'<sup>59</sup>: and all things which are now hidden, will then be known. **Do not be jealous of him who prospers in his way.** Do not let the short lived happiness of the wicked frighten you. **Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: do not be jealous of him to do evil.** Leave off anger, so that you are not compelled to render evil for evil when you suffer wickedness yourself. **You will search for his place, but you will not find it.** If the place of the devil is sin, there will be a time when there is no sin. But this will only be when we have rejoiced in a multitude of peace. **They shall not be ashamed in the evil time: and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.** The wicked time indicates the time of judgement, when the righteous will not suffer famine, and this is said concerning the sinners: 'Woe to you who have been satisfied, since you will go hungry'.<sup>60</sup> **I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a cedar of Lebanon. Yet I passed away, and, behold, he was not there.** When we cross the sea in our world, then we will see that the devil does not exist, and his place of sin will not be visible. **The remnants of the wicked shall be cut off.** Instead of 'end' the Hebrew reads 'last'.

### **Psalm 37** [38]

**O LORD, rebuke me not in your wrath.** The whole Psalm is in the voice of a man repenting: but it can also be related to Christ, just as the sixty-eighth Psalm. **My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness.** This is similar to what is said in another place in the voice of Christ: 'God, you know my foolishness'.<sup>61</sup> **For my loins are filled with delusions.** Let each consider himself one of a kind, and understand this to be the desire that tickles the body, and do the reckoning with the apostle, when he says, 'I am a wretched man, who will release me from the body of this death?'.<sup>62</sup> And another

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<sup>62</sup> Rom. 7, 24.

<sup>63</sup> Rom. 7, 19.

<sup>64</sup> Is. 53, 7.

<sup>65</sup> II Cor. 5, 13.



verse says: 'I do not do what I will, but what I will not to do'.<sup>63</sup> **My lovers and my friends have stood up against me.** This can be taken to concern the disciples, who left the Lord to suffer, through fear of suffering themselves, and to such an extent that even Peter denied him three times. **But I, as a deaf man, heard not; and I was as a dumb man that opens not his mouth.** The Lord did not speak when he was before Pilate, and Isaiah speaks of him: 'just as a lamb to the slaughter does not open its mouth'.<sup>64</sup> **And in whose mouth are no reproofs.** Thus I said nothing when I was brought to trial, as if I knew not what to respond. **I will be sorry for my sin.** The sin of Christ, and those sins committed by the human race: on account of which it is said that he is subject to the Father.

#### **Psalm 38** [39]

**I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because you did it.** I bear this enduringly to such an extent, since I know that you have stopped testing me with temptations.

#### **Psalm 39** [40]

**And he has not regarded their vanities, nor false madnesses.** There is, then, such a thing as spiritual madness, that is, true madness, about which the apostle says: 'if we are out of our mind, it is for the sake of God'.<sup>65</sup> And in the Acts of the Apostles this is said: 'you are mad, Paul, you are mad'.<sup>66</sup> **You did not require a burnt offering for sin. Then I said, behold, I come: at the head of the book it is written of me.** Since you have exchanged the sacrifices and ceremonies of the Jews, after removing the superstition of the ancient law, with the sanctity of the spiritual gospel: thereupon I come into the world joyful. And this is written about me: 'in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and God was the Word'.<sup>67</sup>

#### **Psalm 40** [41]

**When will he die, and his name perish?** This is what is written in the parables of the gospel, when the tenants say, 'this is the heir, come let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours'.<sup>68</sup> **And will he who now lies rise up?** Thus they hurried to kill me, as if I was not in a position to rise again after death. **Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting, and to everlasting, let it be, let it be.** Instead of 'let it be, let it be', the Hebrew has 'amen, amen', which Aquila has translated as *pepistomenos*, that is 'in truth' or 'faithfully'. It should also be noted that this is the end of the first book of the Psalms. The second book starts at the forty-first and ends with the seventy-first. The third from the seventy-second to the eighty-eighth. The fourth from the eighty-ninth to the one hundred and fifth. And the fifth book is from the one hundred and sixth to the end.

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<sup>66</sup> Act. 26, 24.

<sup>67</sup> John. 1, 1.

<sup>68</sup> Luke. 20, 14.

**Psalm 41** [42]

**While they said daily to me, Where is your God?** When I was wanting to please you through repentance and punishment of the body and of the mind, my enemies, as if I were doing this in vain, were saying this: Where is your God?

**Psalm 43** [44]

**Neither shall my sword save me. But you have saved us from our enemies.** This is the reason why I am not to put my hope in my weapons, this is the reason: because you have always saved us from our pursuers, and you have guarded us when we had no army and no sword. **And do not go forth with our armies.** This should be read as a compressed way of saying: you who have always freed us, will you not now therefore accompany us fighting against these men?

**Psalm 44** [ 45]

**At the end to those who will be changed.** Instead of which the Hebrew has: *epinikion huper ton anthon*.<sup>69</sup> But as far as the fact that he says, 'concerning the Beloved', the whole Psalm can be related to Christ, about whom the Father says this in the gospel: 'this is my Son the beloved, whom I love'.<sup>70</sup> **Out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made you glad.** Many people say 'depths' instead of 'palaces' by mistake, since in Greek the word *bareon* means both. **In gold fringes. With variegated surrounds.** This verse does not occur in the Hebrew manuscripts.

**Psalm 47** [48]

**Mount Zion, on the sides of the north.** Since' the north wind is harsh<sup>71</sup>, and 'wickedness burns from the north'<sup>72</sup>, all the saints of the church, who are called the mountains of Zion, have been exposed to the temptations of the devil. **You break the ships of Tarshish with a violent spirit.** Tarshish is more accurately translated as 'sea': but it is named with this word as a homonym for one of twelve stones, since the stone has the colour of a blue or green sea.

**Psalm 48** [49]

**And he will not see corruption, although he has seen wise men dying.** He calls them the wise men of this age, from whom God has hidden the mysteries, which he has revealed to his children.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> i.e. 'Victory sung, over the flowers'.

<sup>70</sup> Matth. 3, 17.

<sup>71</sup> Eccli. 43, 20. according to LXX

<sup>72</sup> Jerem. 1, 14.

<sup>73</sup> Matth. 11, 25.

### **Psalm 50** [51]

**That you might be justified when you speak, and be clear when you judge.** Paul explained this verse at more length in the Epistle to the Romans: although God is able to judge us by the authority of a judge, he desires to be judged with us, so that there seems to be more justice in the judge. **In sin did my mother conceive me.** This is a difficult passage and is to be examined more closely. **You have made known to me the unclear and hidden parts of your wisdom.** This is what he says in another passage: 'unveil my eyes, and I will contemplate the marvels of your law'.<sup>74</sup> **Then will I teach transgressors your ways.** It should be known that it is still possible for a man to be a teacher even after adultery and homicide, so long as he has performed the necessary repentance.

### **Psalm 51** [52]

**And he came and told Saul, and said to him, David is come to the house of Ahimelech.** In the Books of Kings and in the Hebrew Psalter itself is written Abimelech; but since BETH and CAPH in Hebrew are only distinguished by a little serif, such an error is easily made.

### **Psalm 55** [56]

**At the end for the people taken far from the saints, a Psalm of David, when the foreigners held him in Gath.** The Hebrew text reads this: 'concerning the mute dove, of the size of David, the lowly and pure, when the Filistim took him to Gath'. The mute dove, and the lowly and pure David are shown as Christ suffering.

### **Psalm 57** [58]

**The wicked are estranged from the womb.** Some people believe that this concerns the descent of the soul into the body: but some understand it as being about the Jews, because they were estranged from God, since Mary bore the Saviour. **God will break their teeth in their mouth: The Lord will shatter the great teeth of the lions.** By teeth he means 'open persecution', by great teeth he means 'hidden persecution'. **Fire fell upon them, that they could not see the sun.** Sinners see Christ as fire, the righteous see him as the sun of justice. Alternatively: to him who repents, frightened by the threats of the scriptures, the true sun is revealed through the fire of punishment. **Before your pots can feel the thorns, he shall take them away as the living, as if in wrath.** Before your sins reach the end, and the thorns of thoughts sprout in the tree of sins, God will rebuke you, not in his wrath, but like one who is angered: for it is not the anger of God, but his correction. And he will correct you not as the living, but as if living: for those who have the thorns of destruction do not deserve to be called living.

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<sup>74</sup> Ps. 118, 18.

### **Psalm 58** [59]

**I ran and went out without iniquity.** This Psalm can be understood as though spoken through the voice of the Lord, since it is he who says, 'the prince of this world is coming, and he has no hold of me'.<sup>75</sup> **They return at evening: and they suffer hunger like dogs, and go round about the city.** He is speaking about those men of the Jews who will believe at the end of the world. 'When the full number of the Gentiles has come in, then all Israel will be saved'.<sup>76</sup> **Do not slay them, lest they forget your name: scatter them by your power.** Do not completely destroy the Jews, since they have always been called your nation, but scatter them throughout the whole world, so that thus corrected, at least they cease to be proud.

### **Psalm 59** [60]

**And he smote the valley of salt twelve thousand.** One may ask here when the story was written. In the Books of Kings, the story is set out clearly: but in this place the Seventy translators have used the Hebrew word itself, GEMELA instead of 'the valley of salt'. But since the Hebrew word has not actually been translated, it is not comprehensible to those who do not understand the Hebrew language. **Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine.** All these things are spoken concerning the calling of nations: the various values of these nations must be inferred from the translation of the individual names. **Judah is my king.** Since Christ's origins lie in the tribe of Judah.

### **Psalm 61** [62]

**You shall slay all of you.** He who has the will to kill, kills, even if he does not actually strike. **As a bowing wall shall you be, and as a tottering fence.** When I arrive prepared for my passion, you compel me to do as though I were unwilling to die. Alternatively: according to Symmachus' translation: your innate understanding has been inverted, and although you have been created righteous, you will be carried headlong to destruction. **God has spoken once; twice have I heard these words.** 'Once' is not to be understood as the number, but the authority of God's word. But what are the two things, which he heard alike? That God can both do all things, and that in the truth of judgement he is merciful. Some people though think this: God spoke the first time in the law, and he teaches the same things again in the gospel.

### **Psalm 62** [63]

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<sup>75</sup> John. 14, 30.

<sup>76</sup> Rom 11, 25-26.

**My soul thirsts for you, my flesh too in many ways.** The soul yet desires God: but one only arrives at the end of desire by the work of the flesh. Therefore the flesh desires God in many ways, since it is afflicted by many wounds. Look at for example the poverty of a righteous man, his suffering, sleeplessness, sickness, and hunger.

#### **Psalm 64 [65]**

**Surrounded by strength.** He who is 'girt', wraps the garment of God around himself: for we cannot recognise him when the garment of his strength is spread out. **You bless the crown of the year.** The circuit of the year and the endless cycle of the seasons, he calls the 'crown'. Or indeed since in the Lord's suffering he won victory over the whole world.

#### **Psalm 65 [66]**

**I cried to him with my mouth.** In this verse it clearly states that in the scriptures a cry is not from the voice, but from the heart.

#### **Psalm 66 [67]**

**Let God be shine his face upon us, and pity us; and make his way known on earth.** When Christ comes to be revealed in glory, then it will be known to all why he came down previously, lowly in the flesh. **The earth gave its fruit.** Mary bore the Saviour.

#### **Psalm 67 [68]**

**You will send a willing rain.** We should understand the plentiful rain as being either the commandments, or as manners. **And it was weak, but you made it whole again.** The law, which was weakened by the transgressions of the Jews, was strengthened by the coming of the grace of the gospel. **The king of the powers of the beloved.** The powers of the beloved of God, that is Christ, are the apostles. Therefore the Lord, who is king of the powers of the beloved, **will give great power to those proclaiming the gospel**, in their preaching: that having overcome the enemies of the Church, the Jews and the demons, they might divide the spoils. **Though you have slept among the pots, yet shall you be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with shining gold.** If you believe in the two Testaments, you will find the Holy Spirit in each one. And although there is beauty even in a literal understanding of what you read, all the force of the beauty is in the meaning. In this way the outer decoration of the words is shown in the word silver: but the more hidden secrets are contained in the gifts covered with gold. **They were white as snow in Salmon.** Salmon is translated as shadow. Therefore when the heavenly king, Christ begins to set up and distribute his apostles and disciples in his church, they will not have complete lucidity, but each a certain part of that knowledge: 'since now



in part we see, and in part we prophesy'.<sup>77</sup> **The hill of God, the fat hill; an high hill, the fat hill.** This is the hill, to which both in Isaiah and in Micah, the climbers, encourage themselves in turn, in order that they might reach the top.<sup>78</sup> But he also says: in truth it is a 'high' hill, agreeing with the words of the apostle, who says, 'I gave milk to you to drink, not food'.<sup>79</sup> **Why do you look up to the high hills? This is the hill which God desires to dwell in.** This is the meaning: you must not think that the churches, which have copious doctrines are worth more, and that they can nourish with milk the believers of their knowledge. There is but one church, and one Christ, the bridegroom of the church. **For the non-believers also, that the LORD God might dwell among them.** Christ gave freely even to those men, that is, to the people from the tribes, who did not believe that God could dwell among mortal men. **The Lord said, I will turn again from Bashan, that your foot may be dipped in blood, and the tongue of your dogs in the same blood of your enemies.** Bashan is translated as 'disorder'. Therefore God converted us from our disorder. And moreover because he bore the cross, and his own blood poured out from his feet, while the Jews were crying out to him saying, 'crucify, crucify him'. Those Jews were urged on by the enemies of Christ, that is, by demons. But in order that all this might happen, it was the will of the Saviour himself, who suffered these things to happen. **The princes went before, the players on instruments followed after; among them were the damsels playing with timbrels.** The apostles went before joined in step with the congregations. He witnesses that they did indeed 'go before', since the princes of our faith are from among the Jews. **Bless you God in the churches.** He is explaining more clearly the 'timbrels' he had spoken of above. **The Lord, from the fountains of Israel:** since he is the salvation from the Jews, and thence the first church. **Rebuke the beasts of the grass.** The beasts of the grass are demons, frail and of little strength. **Behold, he will send out his voice, and that a mighty voice.** When what he has commanded will come about, then the mighty voice will be given to the voice of the Lord.

#### **Psalm 68 [69]**

**Save me, O God; for the waters are come in to my soul.** All of this Psalm is to be understood as written in the voice of Christ, although some people believe that what follows does not agree so much with this idea: **O God, you know my foolishness; and my sins are not hidden from you. But as for me, my prayer is to you, God.** When the Jews were cursing me, and saying, 'crucify, crucify him', I spoke these words, begging on their behalf: 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do'.<sup>80</sup> **O God, in a time of pleasing.** The time of pleasing is the time of the Passion, in which the Father said, 'this is my Son, whom I love'. **Deliver me out of the mire, that I may not sink.** We must ask then, according to some men, if the mire of flesh that he took on means the wickedness of the flesh. **They gave me also gall for my food; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.** It is understood from both this passage, and from other testimony, that this Psalm ought to relate to Christ. **Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not.** This is exactly what he was praying: that their table turn into a

<sup>77</sup> 1 Cor. 13, 9.

<sup>78</sup> Is. 2, 3; Mic. 4, 2.

<sup>79</sup> 1 Cor. 3, 2.

<sup>80</sup> Luke. 23, 34.

noose, so that they might not know clearly the sacrament of the law. **And their back be always bent.** That they might always be slaves to the Romans. **And let none dwell in their tents.** This is what he says: 'Look, your house is left desolate'<sup>81</sup>. When Christ left Judea, all his miracles also left with him. **But I am poor and sorrowful.** For although he was rich, he became poor on our account. **And despised not his prisoners.** We can make use of this verse, when we praise a martyr at length. Some people believe that this is to be understood regarding souls, since they are not despised by God, being imprisoned in their bodies.

#### **Psalm 71** [72]

**For Solomon.** This Psalm too more correctly is related to Christ: since Solomon was peace-making, and Christ is peace-making. **And let him remain with the sun and before the moon, throughout all generations.** If this Psalm is to be understood as concerning with Solomon, this cannot be completely true, since Solomon did not abide like either the sun or the moon. But if we wish to understand it as concerning Christ, we must ask how it is that Christ has no end, when the sun, the moon, the heavens, and all things are said to grow old and perish.

#### **Psalm 72** [73]

[Ps. 71 vers. 20] **The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended. A Psalm of Asaph.** It ought to be known that the seventy-first Psalm is the end of the second book of Psalms, which has at the end 'let it be, let it be'. We have already shown this to be said as 'amen, amen' in Hebrew. This though must be examined more closely, for 'the prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended' refers to the end of the seventy-first Psalm; and that which follows: 'A Psalm of Asaph', is the beginning of the next Psalm. **Their wickedness stands out as if with fatness.** He is showing the greatness of desire, and the dullness of the body's mind by the word 'fatness'. **They have transgressed in the feeling of the heart.** They have done evil as a result of certain dispositions, enthusiasm, and desire, with the result that they are not led as if unwilling to vices, but rather are carried headlong voluntarily. **If I said, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend against the generation of your children.** The sequence in which the passage is to be understood and the meaning is this: while I myself am accusing in my morning's prayers, I found ground to say this: if I speak like this, and if I want to find out the secrets of God, I stare to become a stranger to your children. **What do I have in heaven but you and what is there upon earth that I desire beside you?** This is to be read with what the Greeks call *emphasis*: you have prepared such great things for me in heaven, but wretched as I was I sought small things from you on earth. Differently: neither in the heavens, nor on earth have I ever sought any other except you.

#### **Psalm 73** [74]

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<sup>81</sup> Matth. 23, 38; Luke. 13, 35.

**The interpretation of Asaph.** The interpretation is stated in the title, because a twofold captivity is then mentioned, that is, one spiritual and one of the flesh. **They set up their signs as signs. And they knew not, as if in the result from above.** In this same way the Babylonians set up their signs in your temple, puffed up to arrogance in the elation of victory, just as trophies stripped from the enemy are usually set up at the gates of cities by conquerors. Symmachus has translated this somewhat more clearly, saying, 'they placed their signs openly in the open entrance of the gates'.

#### **Psalm 74 [75]**

**And he pours out from one to the other.** That is out of the cup of mercy into the cup of punishments. **But its dregs were not emptied.** In order that he who has heard clemency does not become too careless, mercy is mixed with harshness.

#### **Psalm 75 [76]**

**You who shine so wonderfully from the eternal mountains.** The Lord does not shine down from the valleys but from the mountains: nor are these mountains that have a short life, but those that are eternal. **All the foolish of heart are vexed.** After God gave the light of his teachings to the world through the apostles, every wisdom of that age suddenly appeared to be stupid: and though it attempted to resist with struggling admiration, it was nonetheless oppressed. **The remainder of thought rejoices in you.** In the remainder of thought is to be seen the purity of the mind, in which alone God rejoices greatly.

#### **Psalm 76 [77]**

**At the end for Jeduthun.** The Hebrew reads 'through Jeduthun', which means that this Psalm was not sung for Jeduthun but by him. But the phrase which follows: 'A Psalm of Asaph', is not found in the true copies of the text. **And I said, now I have begun.** He replies to his concern that he did not think God oversees mortal affairs, and a solution to the question. Aquila has translated it in this way: 'And I said, this is my infirmity'. The question that I am considering and worrying about comes from the weakness of the mind. **The voice of your thunder was in the circuit.** This circuit, or the present age, which always turns through the circuits of the years: this should be taken to mean either a righteous man, who, though standing one foot on the small earth, strives always for the heights; or indeed more simply that the sound of thunder is like the rotation of a wheel. **In the sea are your ways.** Since the counsel of God is unknown to mankind, this is similar to what Solomon says, who says, that the way of a ship furrowing the sea cannot be known.<sup>82</sup>

#### **Psalm 77 [78]**

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<sup>82</sup> Wisdom, 5, 10.

**And he smote his enemies in the hinder parts: he put them to a perpetual reproach.** Some people quite wrongly have different interpretations of this verse according to allegory: although it is written quite openly in the book of Kings<sup>83</sup>, now that time is spoken of, when five Philistine cities were struck for shame, wounded in their backs, and as a sign of the punishment each and every one of the cities put up golden mice and placed images of their buttocks in a cart alongside the Ark of the Testament.

#### **Psalm 79 [80]**

**And on the son of mankind, whom you have confirmed for yourself.** This is clearly speaking about the coming of Christ. Then in the following verses we find his resurrection mentioned, saying: **You will make us live, and we will call upon your name.**

#### **Psalm 80 [81]**

The following Psalm is prefaced 'to the presses' under the name of Asaph, which is translated as 'congregation': so as to indicate that all things are brought back to refer to God. **You called me in trouble, and I delivered you.** The voice of God speaking is introduced. **So he gave them up to their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels.** The apostle takes his example in the Epistle to the Romans<sup>84</sup> from this verse: and we ought to accept the lesson, lest we become such as to be abandoned to our own thoughts. **And if Israel had walked in my ways, I should soon have subdued their enemies.** This means, it was not a great deed for me to free Israel from the hands of his enemies: but his sins hindered him, and kept me from delivering him. **The enemies of the LORD lied to him: and their time will endure for ever.** Although Israel lied to the Lord, which Aquila has translated as, 'the enemies of the Lord will deny him', yet he will remember the promise which he made to their fathers, and will fulfil this promise: so that when all of the tribes have entered, all Israel will be saved.<sup>85</sup>

#### **Psalm 81 [82]**

**God stood in the congregation of the gods; yet he judges among the gods.** Although God stands in the middle of the angels or saints, whom he now calls gods, yet he judges them. But if he judges gods, what do you think he will do in the case of sinners? **How long will you judge wickedness.** The voice of God is rebuking. **But you shall fall like one of the princes.** One of the princes, either Adam or the devil, about whom the Lord says, 'behold Adam has become like one of us'.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> I Sam. c. 5, 6.

<sup>84</sup> 1, 24.

<sup>85</sup> Rom. 11, 25.

<sup>86</sup> Gen. 3, 22.

**Psalm 82** [83]

**My God, make them as a wheel.** Unstable, fluctuating, not founded on any stable foundation.

**Psalm 83** [84]

**My heart and my flesh cried out for the living God.** It is difficult considering how the flesh of God desires equally with the heart. **Your altars, O LORD of hosts.** The subtext is, my spirit has desired, and my heart and my flesh. **In the valley of tears.** The valley of tears is believed by some people to represent the present world: which Christ set as an arena of conflict, and to which he himself gave the crown and blessings, being the law-giver.

**Psalm 84** [85]

**I will hear what the LORD God will speak against me.** It is not a vain prayer that I have prayed: I feel God in me speaking: I understand peace is proclaimed to me. **Truth has sprung out of the earth.** Since Christ the truth rose from the earth. **And righteousness looked down from heaven.** So that he might have mercy upon mankind, and do good. On account of this **our land shall yield her fruit:** achieving worthy deeds on account of his many blessings.

**Psalm 85** [86]

**Preserve my soul; for I am holy.** Since he suffers not for his sin but for ours, he asks for the Father's help, and there is no doubt that this means Christ. But if you prefer to explain this Psalm as being about David, then this is the meaning: guard my soul, since in this matter over which I am so hard-pressed I have committed nothing worthy of persecution. This can also be read in the seventh Psalm: 'Lord, if I did this, if there be iniquity in my hands'.<sup>87</sup> Not because he had never done anything wicked, but rather because he knew he had not done that, for which he is being punished.

**Psalm 86** [87]

**The LORD loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.** More so than all the tents of the Jews, and the precarious and fortuitous palaces, the Lord loves the virtues of the church, through which we enter heaven. **Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of God.** The whole chorus of prophets proclaims this city. **I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon.** 'Raab' is the name of the

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<sup>87</sup> verse. 4



prostitute in the Book of Joshua, who welcomed the spies; it may also be translated 'onslaught', (which Aquila expresses as *hormema*); and, if written with an AIN, it may be taken to mean 'hunger'. It should be noted, then, that the name 'Raab' is here written in the same letters as it is in the Book of Joshua: so that we should believe this is spoken more concerning the calling of the \* through the \* GENTILES name of the prostitute, than through the pride of Babylon and the captivity of the Jews. **Behold Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia; these men were born there.** It refers to all peoples by mentioning just a few tribes, which are gathered together in the congregation by their faith. **Mother Zion, man will say.** Instead of 'mother Zion', the seventy translators have translated this as: 'will a man say 'Zion'?', since the man Christ was born in that city: but the addition of the Greek letter RHO is the source of the mistake. **And the most high himself established her.** It should be noted that the Son is also called 'the most High'.

### **Psalm 87 [88]**

**At the end for Meleth to reply, the understanding of Heman, the Ezrahite.** This Psalm relates to the end, the Sons of Core chant first, then the whole choir responds with the same words: but this Psalm has been composed wisely and intentionally by Heman the Ezrahite that others might know how to respond to those who are chanting. **Will you show wonders to the dead? shall the doctors arise and acknowledge you?** The Hebrew word Rafaim either means 'giants', or 'doctors'. Symmachus has translated this verse in this way: 'but will the Rafaim who rebelled against God rise up and acknowledge you?'

### **Psalm 88 [89]**

**The understanding of Heman, the Ezrahite.** This Psalm is concluded with the end of the third book of Psalms: and therefore the 'interpretation' is necessary, since the throne of David is promised once again to endure forever, which we meanwhile see to have been already destroyed according to the historical sense. **You have brought down the proud, as one that is wounded.** In place of 'pride' the Hebrew has RAAB, the same letters as written above, which Aquila has translated as 'vehemence', Symmachus as 'presumption', Theodotion as 'pride', and the Sixth edition as 'commotion'. **Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound.** He has written 'joyful sound' instead of 'victory'. Perhaps it is because the joyful man, offering artless sounds, by no means makes a difference of meaning by his words: that he says that those men are blessed, who understand with a keen mind both the hidden prophecy about Christ, and also his sacraments which were hidden. **Then you spoke in vision to your sons.** All other translators have chosen to translate this as 'to your saints'. Then the Sixth edition has 'prophets' instead of 'sons': but it refers to that prophecy which was made to him by Nathan the prophet. **I have exalted one chosen out of my people. I have found David my servant.** By the name 'David' we understand the passage to concern Christ. **Also I made him my firstborn.** This is more clearly speaking about Christ. **And his throne as the sun before me.** We must ask how it is that the throne either of David, or of Christ might endure with the sun and the moon: it cannot be understood easily in

any of the ways above. **But you have cast off and abhorred, you have put off your anointed.** The Father cast off and despised the Son, when he deserted him in his suffering, when he said, 'God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'.<sup>88</sup> But he put him off: so that the saints would wait expectantly for his coming in majesty at doomsday, in the belief that he would then reign. **Let it be, let it be.** Note that the third book ends here with the word 'Amen'.

#### **Psalm 89** [90]

**Our years will be thought of as a web.** Just as the webs of spiders are vain and worthless, and are destroyed by the slightest touch, so too our weak life is very close to death. Aquila has translated this passage in a better way, saying 'our lives are similar to a man speaking': presumably because like a human utterance our lives perish even as they exist. **Make your right hand thus known to me, and make them wise in heart with wisdom.** Symmachus has translated this better, he says, 'make our days thus known, so that we might come wise-hearted. He is praying therefore, that God will show to us the length of our life, so that we may be able to prepare ourselves with wise hearts for his judgement.

#### **Psalm 90** [91]

**He will dwell in the protection of God of heaven.** Instead of God of heaven, the Hebrew has one word for the Lord: 'Saddai': which we also read translated in Ezekiel.<sup>89</sup> But 'Saddai' has been translated by Aquila as *hikanon*.<sup>90</sup> **And the whip will not come near your house.** Instead of whip however, Aquila and Symmachus have translated 'leprosy'. But we should ask therefore, if the whip or the leprosy do not come near the houses of the righteous, why do we always see their houses afflicted by various troubles. We can answer this in this way: it does not come from the wrath of God, as the wrath against Pharaoh, but from temptations, so that all those who are approved are made most public. **Because he has set his hope in me, therefore I will deliver him.** God is introduced speaking about the righteous, who places his hope in him, since he will deliver him. Alternatively he might be speaking about Christ, as many people choose to believe.

#### **Psalm 92** [93]

This Psalm has no title according to the Hebrews. But it does contain a prophecy concerning the reign of Christ: in which he comes first into the world with humility, then will come afterwards in majesty.

#### **Psalm 93** [94]

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<sup>88</sup> Matth. 27, 46.

<sup>89</sup> 10, 5. LXX

<sup>90</sup> i.e. 'sufficient'

This Psalm has no title according to the Hebrew tradition: therefore it is not necessary to discuss the title. **He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?** And so on. But it has been put most elegantly in that having said, 'he who planted the ear', he does not add 'Does he not have ears himself?' and 'he who fixed his eye', he does not add, 'Does he not have eyes himself?' But rather, 'will he himself not hear and see?', so that he might show that virtues lie in hearing and seeing God, not in the sense-organs themselves.

#### **Psalm 94** [95]

**For God is the great Lord.** If Jesus Christ is the one Lord, but the Lord here is said to be a great God: then Christ the Lord is a great God.

#### **Psalm 95** [96]

This Psalm also has no superscription. **Give to the LORD, O you fatherland of the people.** Instead of fatherland, some people have translated *suggeneias*, that is relations. But the peoples are mustered to the church of Christ when Israel is openly despised. **Bring offerings, and come into his courts.** These are the sacrifices, that the apostle mentions, saying, 'a living sacrifice, pleasing to God'.<sup>91</sup> And the Lord says, 'If you will offer your gift upon the altar'.<sup>92</sup> **For he rebuked the sphere of the world, that it shall not be moved.** Rebuked, since it had been corrupted by the error of demons. **Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad.** If the angels rejoice over one man doing repentance, how much more will they when all people have been converted?

#### **Psalm 96** [97]

**A fire will go before him.** So that it burns up his adversaries<sup>93</sup>, or that it tests the work of every man.<sup>94</sup> **And let all his angels revere him.** The apostle to the Hebrews has used this verse.<sup>95</sup> **You that love the LORD, hate evil.** It is impossible for two loves, one of good and one of evil, to co-exist. But the expression is ambiguous as to whether he, who loves God, should hate a wicked thing, or hate the evil devil.

#### **Psalm 97** [98]

Both this Psalm and the previous one have no superscription.

#### **Psalm 98** [99]

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<sup>91</sup> Rom. 12, 1.

<sup>92</sup> Matth. 5, 23.

<sup>93</sup> Is. 26, 11.

<sup>94</sup> I Cor. 3, 13.

<sup>95</sup> c. 1, v. 6.

**The king's strength also loves judgement.** Aquila has translated it in this way: 'and the power of a king loved judgement'. The meaning is this: through judgement wickedness is punished: and when wickedness has been punished, the greatness of the king is increased. **And worship at his footstool.** Certain people believe that the footstool ought to be understood as being the flesh of his anointed, which also ought to be worshipped with the Word. But a better understanding would be to interpret this by tropology: so that just as the throne of God is called the heavens, so too the footstool becomes the earth, or the power, which subjects to him things heavenly and earthly. **And worship at his holy hill.** This is the holy mountain, which wounded the king of Tyre.<sup>96</sup>

#### **Psalm 99** [100]

**It is he that made us, and not we ourselves.** This is phrased better in the Hebrew: 'He himself has made us, and we are his'.

#### **Psalm 100** [101]

**In the morning I destroyed all the sinners of the land.** 'Morning' means the swift and the pressing nature of the affair: he did not permit sin to last for long, but as soon as he knew it was there, he killed it. This is just as God said that he had sent his prophets, arriving when the dawn was approaching, that is, quickly. **That I cut off all wicked doers from the city of the LORD.** The apostle says this too: 'remove wickedness from your midst'.<sup>97</sup> If the city of the Lord is the church of Christ, whoever does wickedness, must be expelled from the city of God.

#### **Psalm 101** [102]

**A prayer of the poor, when he is overwhelmed, and pours out his prayer in the sight of the LORD.** Just as this Psalm seems to have a assumed person, so too some people would like to see other Psalms as being written by David, with persons ascribed to them, under whose names they are to be understood. But the poor man became poor for our sake although he was rich beforehand, the apostle teaches.<sup>98</sup>

#### **Psalm 102** [103]

**Who heals all your diseases; Who redeems your life from destruction.** All of these qualities, which are known to be curative to the soul, the Lord Jesus Christ provided both spiritually and physically.

#### **Psalm 103** [104]

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<sup>96</sup> Ezech. 28, 16. (LXX)

<sup>97</sup> I Cor. 5, 13.

**The deep was a garment of his clothing.** The clothing of God is not the deep, as many wrongly believe. But according to the Hebrew manuscripts his garments must be understood as being of the feminine gender, as if the word 'earth' is presupposed here, since all the lands of the earth are closed in by the seas, and all things are encompassed by the waters. **The waters will stand above the mountains. At your rebuke they will flee.** All these things hold good according to the historical interpretation: since the waves of the sea rise up in the likeness of the mountains, and then again they recede in the likeness of a valley. But the following interpretation is in the allegorical mode. **You made the darkness, and it is night: wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth.** The historical sense of this passage is evident, since animals prefer to be active at night, avoid men's traps in the darkness, and as soon as the sun has risen, they return to their lairs. It could however be seen anagogically as relating to the night of this present age: for when a man has been surrounded by wickedness, the beasts, that is wicked powers attack him, and seek food for themselves; but when through conversion and repentance the true light has begun to rise up in his body, then the beasts will recede, and return to their lairs. As for the fact that he says the beasts seek food for themselves from God, he means, that the beasts like to eat no others more than the righteous. **Man goes forth to his work.** When the beasts have returned to their caves, and the sun has risen, then man immediately goes to his work. **O LORD, how manifold are your works! in wisdom you made them all.** If he made them all in wisdom, where are those who criticise their creator, on the grounds that he made the snakes, lizards, fleas, bugs, and other insects of that type, which are superfluous or to be harmful? **So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.** The sea of this age is of great expanse: and all that are in it are called reptiles, and there are a great number of them. There are also smaller animals alongside the big ones in the sea, so that none should presume his own greatness, as long as he is in the expansive sea of his own time, however big it is, he should still know that he is a reptile. **There the ships will cross.** There crosses the ship, whose trace according to Solomon, cannot be found.<sup>99</sup> And notice, how carefully he said 'the dragon', which is described in this verse: **There is that dragon, whom you made for its sport.** This dragon has been created for this reason, so as to be mocked by children, as Isaiah says.<sup>100</sup> Differently: the dragon has been made, so that it might play in the sea and rule for ever.

#### **Psalm 104 [105]**

**Alleluia.** Even until this age it is the custom of the Jews that they assign Alleluia to no other Psalm when they read it aloud, except to one that has the superscription or subscription of Alleluia in the Psalter. But we are accustomed to using the word indifferently, saying Alleluia even in the Psalms, which either fulfil the true history, or through repentance bemoan with tears, or demand victory over enemies, or pray that we be freed from troubles. As far as the fact that we say it once, it must be noted in all instances, that wherever an Alleluia is placed at the beginning of a Psalm, it is again written at the

<sup>98</sup> 2 Cor. 8. 9.

<sup>99</sup> Wis. 5. 10.



end of that Psalm. And there are many who do not know this and think that this is the beginning of the following Psalm for this reason, which is quite wrong. Then too you will sometimes find that Alleluia is written twice at the beginning of the one Psalm, which means that one should be at the end of the previous Psalm, and the other belongs at the start of the following. **When he went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people.** It is said to Abraham: 'leave your country, and from your kindred'.<sup>101</sup> **Touch not mine anointed.** Let it be known that they were called anointed even before the anointing, from which we observe that the anointing was not so much of oil, but of the Spirit.

#### **Psalm 105 [106]**

**They sang his praise.** He speaks of that song, which is in the Book of Exodus: 'Praise the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously'.<sup>102</sup> **They made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image.** Josephus deliberately omits this passage in his books on Archaeology.<sup>103</sup> **Therefore he lifted up his hand against them, to overthrow them in the wilderness.** The raising of the hand shows the action of an angry and violent man. **And repented according to the multitude of his mercies. He gave them over to be pitied and to compassion.** He is speaking about various captivities, when they were released from captivity by Cyrus of Babylon: and Darius later confirms this act of kindness, and then also Artaxerxes after him. Ptolemy also released captives from Egypt back to Judea, which the Macedonians took prisoner. **And let all the people say, let it be.** The end of the fourth book has only one Amen, although there are two written in the Greek.

#### **Psalm 106 [107]**

**Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in poverty and iron.** These are the poor, who are mentioned in the twentieth and the first Psalm: 'the poor will eat and they will be satiated'.<sup>104</sup> They are in chains and in darkness, to whom Isaiah also preaches, saying, 'go forth, show yourselves'.<sup>105</sup> And so the allegory in this passage is very evident: for we do not read that the Jews were bound in the wilderness and in darkness. **They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; These see the works of the LORD.** The temptations by which we are shaken daily are indicated by the metaphor of the sea, waves and of storms. **Those who is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the LORD.** This is similar to that which is said at the end of Hosea, from which we learn that although those things which are written seem to bear an historical sense, in fact they demand a spiritual understanding.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> 11, 6-8?

<sup>101</sup> Gen. 12, 1.

<sup>102</sup> Ex. 15, 1.

<sup>103</sup> Lib. 3, c. 5.

<sup>104</sup> Ps. 21, 27.

<sup>105</sup> Is. 49, 9.

<sup>106</sup> c. 14, v. 10.

### **Psalm 107** [108]

**Over Edom will I cast out my shoe.** Instead of 'cast out', Aquila has translated 'cast forth', since clearly Edom has been subjected by him. But Edom may be translated as the 'of the land', or 'bloodied'. The whole Psalm moreover can be seen in a double sense to pertain either to David, since he ruled over these peoples with God's help; or to Christ, that we should understand the many virtues of the Church in the translation of the Hebrew names.

### **Psalm 108** [109]

**And let the devil stand at his right hand.** Instead of the devil, in Hebrew is written 'satan', which is translated as 'adversary'. The word devil is in fact a Greek word<sup>107</sup>, which we can translate as meaning an accuser. **And let his prayer become sin.** For when he repented his betrayal, he hanged himself with a noose. **That they may know that this is your hand; that you, LORD, hast done it.** Let Pilate, Herod, and the Jews know that I have suffered not by their power, but by your will, nor did I drink unwillingly from the cup, which I drained happily, when I knew this was what was to be done. Not my will, but yours: that is, not the will of man which I had assumed, but the will of God.

### **Psalm 109** [110]

**The LORD said to my Lord.** The first noun 'Lord' is the *tetragrammaton*, which is proper to God. The other noun 'Lord' is common to others also, by it kings and other men are sometimes called. And if the Arian heresy should wish to confront us and to argue on the basis of the difference of names that the Son was lesser and the Father was greater, we would answer that the lower name was appropriate.<sup>108</sup> **The beginning will be with you in the day of your power, in the splendour of the saints.** The beginning is however always with Christ: and also in the day when by his incarnation he conquers the enemy, he has always an ineffable origin to his nature. But this beginning and this virtue indeed grow brighter when in the state of war, when the saints, that is, those who believe in him, have rejoiced in his leadership. **He drinks of the brook in the way: therefore he lifted up the head.** On account of the similarity of the Hebrew letters, where the seventy translators have translated 'head', can also be read as 'chief'. Elija also drank from the brook. And our Lord endured, overcame and oppressed in his suffering the waters stirred up by the whirlwind of our age, and by the many vices of the world, being hungry and drinking for our sake, and lifting up our head.

### **Psalm 110** [111]

This is the first Psalm written according to the order of the alphabet: even though many believe that the twenty-fourth Psalm and the thirty-sixth Psalm also were written in Hebrew according to the sequence

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<sup>107</sup> Hier. "diabolus".

<sup>108</sup> cf. v. 1

of the alphabet. But some letters are missing in them, are superfluous; and sometimes although the one verse is short, another is greater by a variable length. For this reason I think this was more the result of the observation of those reading the Psalms, than to do with the intention of the author. Finally, the Seventy Translators though, feeling some doubt, refused to include the Hebrew letters into their translation.

#### **Psalm 111** [112]

This Psalm too, just like the previous one, is written according to the order of alphabet. And in this way it is ethical, teaching us morality, and through the beginnings of the letters it brings us towards greater things. In these two Psalms the smaller verses make up the length of the Hebrew sentence, which is contrived in the one hundred and eighteenth Psalm: where in that Psalm one letter is used, here two different ones are used consecutively according to the order of the alphabet.

#### **Psalm 112** [113]

**Praise you children the LORD.** Here the children are encouraged to praise, about whom the Saviour says in Isaiah, 'Here I am and the children, whom the Lord has given to me'.<sup>109</sup> The praising of God is fulfilled and completed from the mouths of infants and weaning children.

#### **Psalm 113** [114]

**What ails you, O you sea, that you fled? you Jordan, that you were driven back?** He questions insensible things as if they were sensible, as to why their nature has changed. **Tremble, you earth, at the presence of the Lord.** The Psalmist himself answers on their behalf that all things happen in the sight of God, since he is the creator of all. **The heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD'S: but the earth has he given to the children of men.** Where there is no crime, higher than all heights, there the Lord lives: but he gives the most lowly and despised places to mankind to inhabit.

#### **Psalm 114** [116]

**I will please the LORD in the land of the living.** Instead of 'I will please', the Hebrew has 'I will walk'. Even in Genesis it is written about Enoch: 'Enoch walked with God, and he was taken'.<sup>110</sup> Not, 'it was pleasing to God' as is written in our manuscripts.

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<sup>109</sup> Is. 8, 18.

<sup>110</sup> Gen. 5, 24.

### **Psalm 115** [116]

The fifth and sixth editions place this Psalm together with the previous ones: but Symmachus and the seventy translators separate them. **I said in the excess of my mind, every man is a liar.** Where we read 'liar', in Hebrew it is written KIVZHB: which Symmachus has translated as 'a lie', but the fifth edition has it as 'falls short'. Therefore it does not so much mean that all men are liars, as mean that all mankind is a lie and is falling away: since he passes by quickly, and walks in a mere likeness, and like a shadow our life comes to an end within a brief time-span. **I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD.** In return for this benefice, the fact that God has graced my soul, since he made me from nothing, what else can I do, except but offer it to my creator seeing as it was he who gave it? **I will pay my vows to the LORD.** He says that he will praise after death, and that death should not be thought of as an end. **Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.** In the law death both is defiled, and defiles: therefore he is prophesying about the martyrs of the gospel.

### **Psalm 116** [117]

**O praise the LORD, all you nations.** Where we read 'praise the Lord', in Hebrew is written 'alleluia'.

### **Psalm 117** [118]

**O Lord, deliver me.** This is what is written in the Gospel, since when the Lord entered Jerusalem children took up palm leaves, and those walking before him cried out together, 'Hosanna upon high, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord', this is taken from this very Psalm. And where we read *soson de* that is, 'deliver (me)', in Hebrew is written as OSIANNA.

### **Psalm 118** [119]

The whole of this Psalm is written according to the order of the alphabet<sup>111</sup>: thus the eight verses begin with one letter, and the following eight are again headed by the next letter, and this is repeated until the end. But Jospheus says in his books of Jewish Antiquities<sup>112</sup> that this Psalm and the song in Deuteronomy are composed in the same meter. And he thinks that the elegiac meter can be discerned in each, since the first verse has six feet, and the pentameter smaller by one foot finishes the verse.

### **Psalm 119** [120]

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<sup>111</sup> i.e. as an acrostic

<sup>112</sup> In Jerome, *'Books of Archaiologias'*

The fifteen Psalms of Ascent conduct us by degrees, so to speak, to the top of the Lord, 'behold, now bless the Lord, all servants of the Lord, in the courts of his house'.<sup>113</sup> And since there is widespread discussion over this Psalm by many people, it is of little purpose to speak of minor affairs instead of more weighty ones. **In my distress I cried to the LORD, and he heard me.** Three matters are briefly discussed in this one verse: trouble, prayers, and listening. **Sharp arrows of the mighty, with desolatorean coals.** Instead of desolatorean coals, in Hebrew there is *arkeuthinois*, that is 'of juniper'. I also believe there to be desolatorean coals in Isaiah, which he brings up to his lips, so that he might purge the vices which he has amassed either by speaking or being silent on account of fear. So here he prays for a similar coal: so that a coal from the altar of God might be given to him, which might keep his sins to a minimum on his lips, that is, make him a stranger to sins.

#### **Psalm 120** [121]

**The sun shall not burn you by day, nor the moon by night.** The righteous man is neither able to be elated by good fortune, nor dejected by sorrows. Both at night and during the day, that is by the light of the sun, or by the moon.

#### **Psalm 121** [122]

**I was glad at the things they said to me.** Since he had heard in the last Psalm, 'the Lord guard your entrance and your exit', now therefore he says that he is *glad*, because his entry into the Lord's house has been promised him. <sup>\*</sup>**Whose participation is in itself.** This is the building of a sacred city, if it participates in every part of itself, and if its members are mutually concerned for each other.

#### **Psalm 122** [123]

**To you I lifted up mine eyes, O you that dwell in the heavens.** You must note, that through each of these Psalms there are, as it were, further advances in the ascent. He who said in the first, 'I called to the Lord in my distress': and in the second that he had lifted his eyes to the mountains: also that he was happy, since his entry into the house of the Lord was promised him: now he moves on to greater matters, so that he raises his eyes to God himself, who lives in heaven.

#### **Psalm 123** [124]

**Then our soul crossed the waters.** This is written better in Hebrew: 'the torrent rushed over our soul'. Since many surges of temptations gushed over his soul, but they were not able to kill his soul as the righteous man says, **if it had not been the LORD who was on our side, now may Israel say; Then the waters had overwhelmed us.** The word *anupostaton* in Greek is ambiguous, and it can mean that it does not stand still, and that it is irresistible, that no one is able to bear it. Instead of this Aquila,

<sup>113</sup> Ps. 133

\* "PROMISED HIM AGAIN"



Symmachus, Theodotion, and all the translators agree, translating 'proud' waters and 'boastful' instead of *anupostatton*.

#### **Psalm 124** [125]

**For the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous.** Instead of rod, the Hebrew has 'sceptre'. This is therefore what we are seeking: lead us not into temptation, which we are not able to bear. **As for such as turn aside to their obligations, the LORD shall lead them forth.** Instead of obligations, Aquila has translated *diaplokas*, Symmachus has *skoliotetas*, and the fifth edition *diestrammenas*.

#### **Psalm 125** [126]

**We were made like them that were comforted.** Instead of 'comforted', all other editions have translated the same: 'dreamers'. And the choice of dreamers is most elegant: for happiness is not yet fulfilled, while the remnants are held in captivity.

#### **Psalm 126** [127]

This Psalm is named with the superscription of Solomon, so that the builder of the temple himself teaches that his building was worth nothing without the help of the Lord. **You who eat the bread of sorrow.** Instead of sorrow, Theodotion and the fifth edition have translated 'idols', the sixth has 'error'. The meaning therefore according to the literal interpretation: that is, 'you run at dawn to the temple without cause, and believe that you are worshipping God, you who also worship idols equally, and eat unclean bread'. **As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of those who are expelled.** He calls 'expelled' those who are prompt and girt for battle. This is the same word which has been used by the seventy translators in the book of Ezra. **Happy is the man that has his desire full of them.** Instead of desire, the Hebrew has 'quiver': so that, having previously written 'arrows' as an image for the saint, he may now bring on a quiver to be filled with those arrows.

#### **Psalm 128** [129]

**The LORD is righteous: he has cut asunder the necks of the wicked.** Instead of necks the Hebrew has 'cords' or 'chains'. This makes the meaning like this: they had walled me in on all sides with their plots, and now held me vanquished, yet all bonds have been released with the aid of the Lord.

#### **Psalm 131** [132]

**LORD, remember David, and all his customs: as he swore to the LORD.** Instead of 'as' the Hebrew has 'who'. The meaning therefore is this: Lord, remember David, and all his kindness: he who

swore to the Lord, and gave prayer to the God of Jacob. **Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah.** The area of Bethlehem is even to this day still called Ephratah: the other scriptures bear witness to this fact. **I will abundantly bless her widow: I will satisfy her poor with bread.** Instead of widow, that is *chera*, both the Hebrew and the seventy translators have *theran*. But on account of the strangeness of the word and the exchange of one letter, little by little *thera* became replaced with *chera*: precisely because the poor are mentioned in the following verse. Symmachus and Aquila have translated *thera* as 'rations'. **But upon himself shall my saintliness flourish.** Instead of 'saintliness' the Hebrew has NAZER, which Aquila translates as 'consecrated': and it means a leaf of gold, which is tied on the forehead of a priest, with the name of the Lord engraved on it.

#### **Psalm 132** [133]

**It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon Aaron's beard.** Aaron should be read in the Genitive case; that is, 'that ran down onto the beard of Aaron'. **As the dew of Ahermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion.** Ahermon is translated as *anathema*. The mountain itself, which by a change of the word is also called Hermon and Sanir, consecrated to idols, and covered with the constant blood of enemies. What he is saying then, is this: all grace and power of idolatry, and sublimation and splendour of worship should go to the mountain of Zion, that is to the church of Christ.

#### **Psalm 133** [134]

**In the halls of the house of our God.** This verse is not in the Hebrew manuscripts, nor in any edition, or even found in the seventy translators' version, but it seems to me that it has been added to this Psalm from the following one. **The LORD that made heaven and earth bless you out of Zion.** This is a fitting end to the songs of ascents, concluding the Psalm with a benediction.

#### **Psalm 134** [135]

**For the LORD has chosen Jacob to himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure.** Except for the Holy Scriptures none of the outwardly learned men have used the word *periousio*, that is 'treasure'. Therefore the meaning of the phrase is difficult to know, since the word, by which we might know the meaning, is unclear on account of its strangeness. Aquila moreover and the fifth edition have translated it similarly. Symmachus alone has 'peculiar', that is *exaireton*, which is written in Hebrew as SVGVLLA, and which can be better rendered in Latin as 'peculium'<sup>114</sup>. **He brought the clouds from the ends of the earth.** These are the clouds, that the Lord commands not to rain down upon sinners<sup>115</sup>, and which are gathered from fishermen and the most lowly of men. **He made lightnings for the rain.**

<sup>114</sup> i.e. 'private property'

<sup>115</sup> Is. 5, 6.

When the apostles and prophets speak, their brightness illuminates the world. **He brought the wind out of his treasures.** Diverse are graces of the spirit, brought forth from the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

#### **Psalm 135** [136]

**O give confession to the LORD; for he is good.** Confession is written instead of praise, as in the verse saying, 'I confess to you, Lord Father of heaven and Earth.'<sup>116</sup> This Psalm though is similar to the previous one, praising God first for his creations, then for his blessings: that is, first in general, then more specifically. **The Lord who remembered us in our low estate.** Here humility is written not instead of kindness, but instead of trouble.

#### **Psalm 136** [137]

**By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down and we wept.** This Psalm can be understood in three different ways: firstly as concerning the captivity of the Jews, when they were taken to Babylon, and there mocked by many means; secondly as concerning the sinners, who are handed to the devil's command when they are expelled from the church; and thirdly as concerning an early captivity, as certain people believe, by which a once-noble race was led into the valley of tears. **We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.** He who sits by the rivers of Babylon and remembers Zion is not able to hold in his tears, nor must he despair deep down from all hope of salvation. But the willow is a fruitless tree, which always prefers damp, sodden rainy conditions. Thus it would be the same for us, were we saints; if we surrendered ourselves to vices, to lust, and lasciviousness, we would then hang from the fruitless tree the instruments which we once used to sing to God. **Sing us one of the songs of Zion.** The proud winner desires that sport and entertainment be provided for him from the songs of God. **How shall we sing the LORD'S song in a strange land?** When our flesh serves only vices and sins, even the earth is then made foreign to us, and we can no longer sing to God. **Remember, O LORD, the children of Edom.** Read the prophet Obadiah, and there you will find that the Idumaeans rejoiced in the day of the capture of the Jews, and standing in the way to capture those who were fleeing, so that none was able to escape. But since Edom is translated as 'of land' or 'lacking', you must always understand this as concerning opposing and enemy armies, so that nothing remains in the church or in Jerusalem. **O wretched daughter of Babylon.** Instead of the Genitive case the Hebrew has the vocative. The *apostrophe* is directed at Babylon, so that the meaning is this: O daughter Babylon. Aquila and Symmachus have translated 'wretched' as 'devastated' and 'laid waste'. **Happy shall he be, that rewards you as you have rewarded us.** This means Cyrus, it is said, who brought Babylon under his power, and who fought fiercely against the Chaldeans until he was old and could hurt them no more, and first sent back the captured of Israel to Judea. Alternatively, every saint renders to Babylon her reward; he leads captive her who had once held him captive; and smashed the

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<sup>116</sup> Matth. 11, 25. Luke. 10, 21.

first unclean thoughts against the rock, (for the rock is Christ), lest they increase and increase and coming of age resist him with more strength than before, and are then not able to be destroyed.

#### **Psalm 138** [139]

**Your knowledge has become too wonderful for me.** Symmachus has translated this much more clearly as, 'your knowledge eludes me', that is, I cannot know your secrets, and my mind is not able to enter into the depth of your wisdom. **Whither shall I go from your spirit? or whither shall I flee from your presence?** But how can I understand your knowledge, when all things are in you, and there is nothing that can flee you, and everywhere is your Spirit? From this we deduce that there is a God who is wholly omnipresent. **If I ascend up into heaven, you are there: if I go down into hell, behold, you are there.** Etc. No height is higher than you, no depth lower than you: east and west are held in your hands. **And I said, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be my light in times of trouble.** In the Hebrew text the meaning is this: and I said, perchance the darkness will cover me: in contrast though night herself was a light for you, since nothing can hide you. Symmachus has translated this better, saying, 'and night is a light about me'. The following verses also seem to continue this idea. **The darkness hides not from you; but the night shines as the day: just as his darkness, so is his light.** That is, all things are so well known, that are thought to be hidden from you, that they are made clearer than light. **You have welcomed me in my mother's womb.** The fifth edition has translated it this way: 'you have fashioned me in my mother's womb'. **Your eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect.** Imperfect here is written instead of disordered: since God knows the elements of a man, even before he is formed in the womb. **And in your book all are written.** And this is because none is born without the will of God, and none escapes his notice. **The days will be formed, yet there is none in them.** Symmachus has translated this passage in this way: 'the days in which they are created, not even one is missing from them.' And this is the meaning: Every lifetime, to which from its very beginning a set course is assigned, runs on to a specified end. And not one day is more or less than you, O Creator, have wanted it to be. But according to the seventy translators and thus the more spiritual understanding, the meaning is this: it is you who shape all from day to day, and it is your will that all should be children of the day: but there is no man who is made exempt from sin, and through this fault becomes a son of the night. And none of them perform deeds worthy of the light of that day at every time in their life. The apostle speaks of this to those who have ceased to be sons of night, saying, 'but we, brothers, are not the sons of night, but of day'.<sup>117</sup>

#### **Psalm 139** [140]

**The circuit of them that compass me about, let the mischief of their own lips cover them.** This is a prophecy of punishments against the wicked: that the plots, which they have prepared with great labour against the righteous, will fall back on them.

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<sup>117</sup> Thess. 5, 5.

**Psalm 140** [141]

**Let the righteous rebuke me in kindness: and let him reprove me; the oil of sinners shall not anoint my head.** It is better to be rebuked by a righteous man, than to be praised by a sinner. **Since until now even my prayer has been sweet to them.** So much do they consider all things to be contemptible, that they even make game out of my prayer, and ridicule me, since I beg mercy from God. **As the fatness of the earth breaks out over the earth, our bones are scattered beside hell.** Symmachus has translated this passage in this way: 'as a farmer when he cleaves the earth, so are our bones dissipated in the mouth of hell'. **Let sinners fall into his own nets.** We are better to read 'their' instead of 'his', so that the meaning is this: sinner will fall into their own nets: so that they themselves might feel the tricks, which they have prepared for the innocent.

**Psalm 143** [144]

**Blessed be the LORD my God, which teaches my hands to war.** This can be understood as concerning both a spiritual and a physical war, in which our enemies are vanquished for us by God. **Who subdue my people under me.** This can refer to David also, who reigned over the tribes in Judea: but it is perhaps better understood as concerning the apostles, through whom the people of God were subjected.

**Psalm 144** [145]

This Psalm too is written in Hebrew according to the order of the alphabet, and it is written in the same meter, in which the 118<sup>th</sup> is written. But there is a difference between that one and this, because that one contains eight verses under each letter, and this Psalm has only one verse each. It must be noted too that in the seventy translators' text the letter NUN has been added, and this is not found in the Hebrew versions. It contains this verse: 'the Lord is faithful in all of his words, and holy in all his deeds'. **The LORD is good to all: and his mercies are over all his works.** we can use this Psalm against the Novatianists, as none is outside salvation. But as the Lord has mercy in all his deeds, the righteous should duly be praised, since he takes pity on his beasts of burden. **The LORD upholds all that fall, and raises up all those that are bowed down.** Both before they fall he gives them help, in case they should be carried headlong to their death. And when they slip, he upholds them. And he upholds not just some of them, but all: the adulterer, the fornicator, the murderer, can all obtain salvation if they repent. And the heresies are torn apart, which repudiate the pardoning of greater crimes.

**Psalm 145** [146]



**Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of men, in whom there is no help.** And so on. Do not put your trust in princes, since being mortals and men, they also die in the end, and all hope which we have in them, is suddenly taken along with them. **Which executes judgment for those suffering wickedness.** If we happen to suffer a wicked judge, let us reread this verse, and let us trust that we have a righteous judge. **But the way of the wicked he destroys.** Note here that it is not the wicked themselves that are turned upside down, but the way of the wicked.

**Psalm 146** [147]

**Praise you the LORD: for it is good to sing praises.** Instead of 'praise the Lord', the Hebrew has ALLELUIA. Instead of which the fifth edition has 'praise IA', that is the Lord. IA is one of the ten names of God. **And he binds up their wounds.** This is the Samaritan from the Gospel<sup>118</sup>, who dressed the wounds of a half-dead man, and poured on the ointment of mercy, and took him back to his church, and gave him to the bishops to be cured. HERE ENDS THE EXCERPTA DE PSALTERIO.

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<sup>118</sup> Luke. 10, 33.

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